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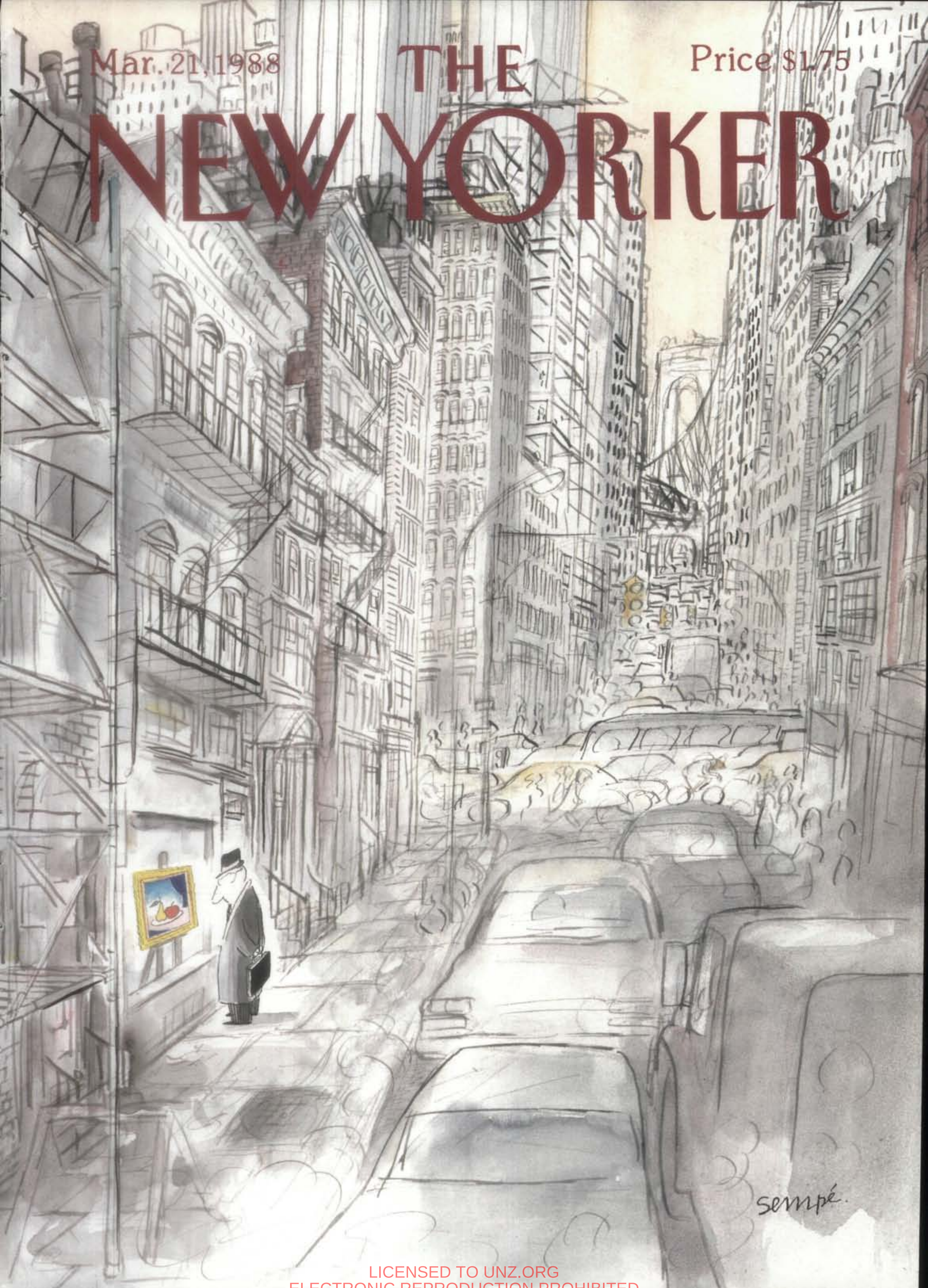

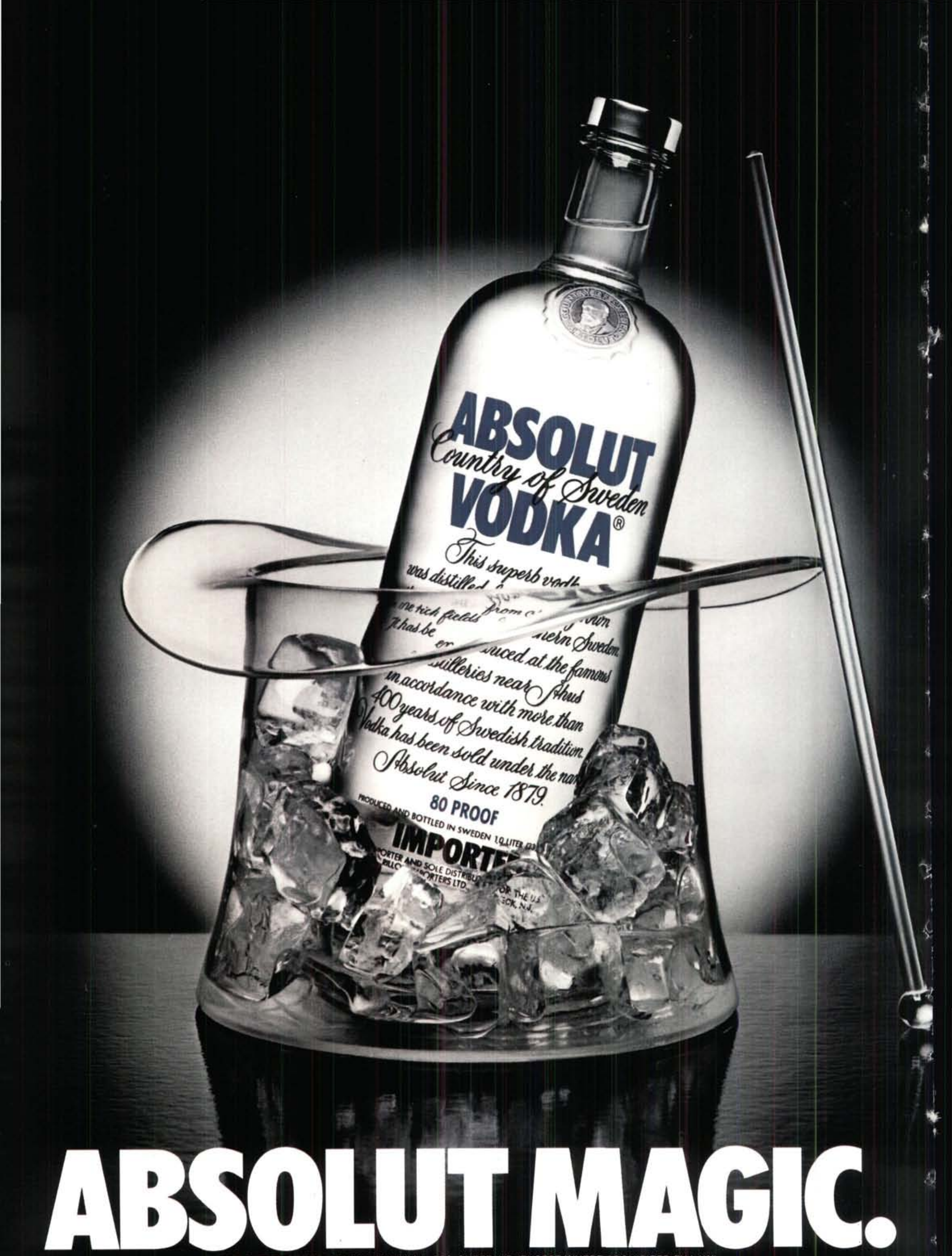
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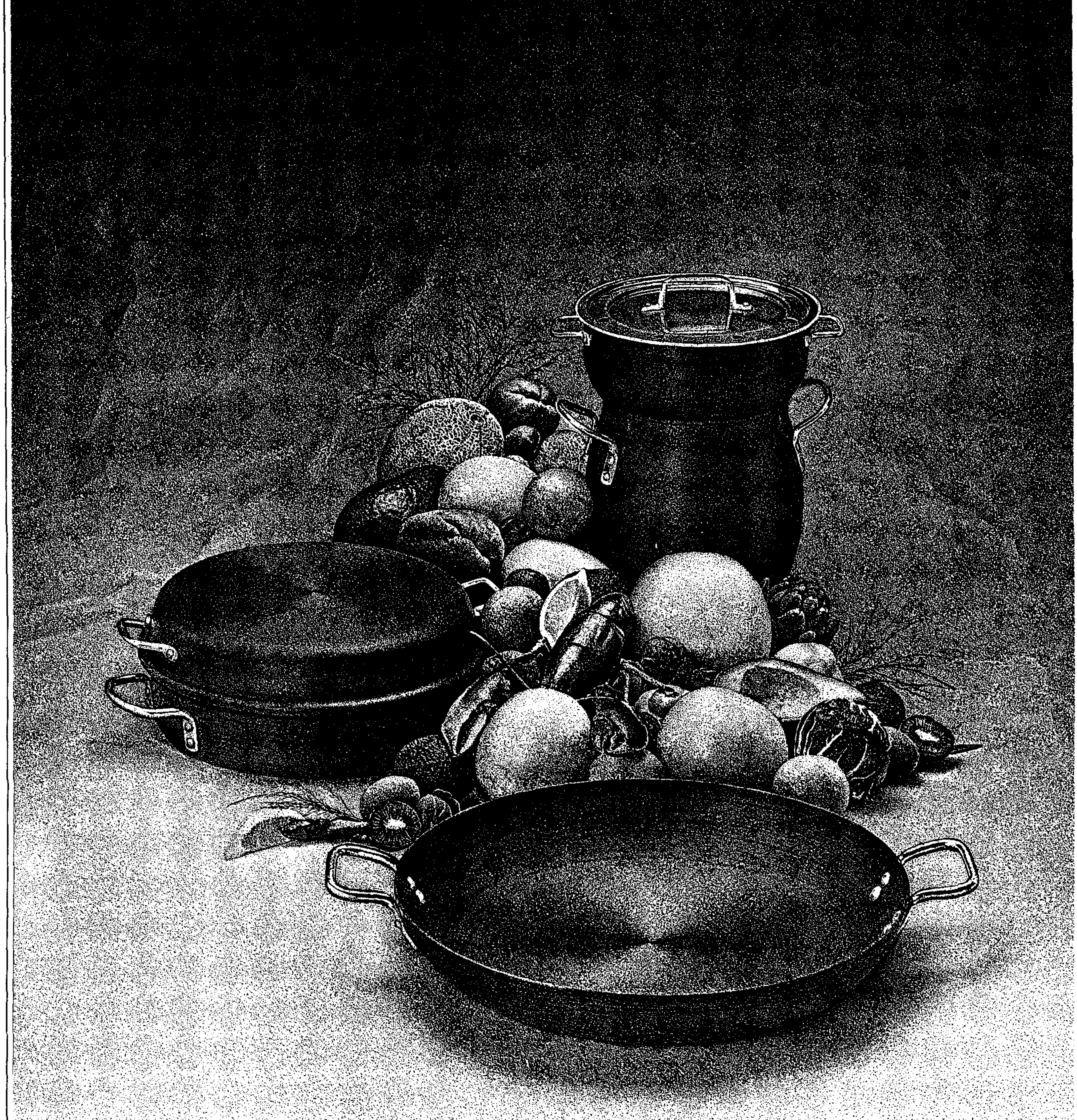

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Another Phaedra Via Hercules—A theatrical work by Ellen Stewart. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

Anything Goes—Under the clever direction of Jerry Zaks, this exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The libretto, as revised from the original by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman, is consistently entertaining. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/2/87.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Boys' Life—A comedy by Howard Korder. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

The Boys Next Door—The "boys" are three retarded men and a schizophrenic who, under professional supervision, share an apartment. Tom Griffin's good play, though inevitably touching, is also often very funny, and never sentimental. It is acted to near-perfection by a first-rate company, which includes Christine Estabrook, Josh Mostel, and William Jay. (2/22/88) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Breaking the Code—Derek Jacobi is accomplished and fascinating as the English mathematician Alan Turing, who helped crack the German Enigma code during the war, but Hugh Whitemore's script is more vehicle than play. Michael Gough, Rachel Gurney, and Jenny Agutter are among the good supporting actors. Clifford Williams was the director. (11/30/87) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Burn This—Lanford Wilson's play can be considered an occasion for an astonishing performance by John Malkovich, as a foul-mouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. The supporting actors—Joan Allen, Jonathan Hogan, and Lou Liberatore—are also good. Marshall W. Mason was the director, and the distinguished setting was designed by John Lee Beatty and lighted by Dennis Parichy. (10/26/87) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Cabaret—This tasteful revival of the 1966 musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb (directed by Harold Prince) has a gloriously muted Joel Grey re-creating his role as the Emcee and a sterling performance by Alyson Reed, who plays Sally Bowles as she was always meant to be played. (11/2/87) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Cherry Orchard—Even the fine performances of Erland Josephson as wistful, hapless Gaev and Željko Ivanek as scruffy, passionate Trofimov cannot shed light on Peter Brook's opaque production of Chekhov's masterpiece. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2.)

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Equity Library Theatre—A revival of **leave it to me**, Cole Porter's 1938 musical, is the sixth in this season's series of eight productions. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, April 3. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune—Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue in the Fifties. Kathy Bates and Kenneth Welsh are remarkable, under the direction of Paul Benedict. (11/9/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Special performance for the Equity Fights AIDS Fund on Monday, March 14, at 8.)

The Great Hunger—A play by Tom MacIntyre. Presented by the Abbey Theatre of Ireland. Opens Tuesday, March 15, and will run through Sunday, March 27. (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Into the Woods—The new musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The amusing first half is like a musical staging of Bruno Bettelheim's "The Uses of Enchantment." The rather nasty second half degenerates into cheap philosophy. The costumes (by Ann Hould-Ward) and sets (by Tony Straiges) are pretty to look at, and the songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. The superb cast, led by Bernadette Peters and Joanna Gleason, is directed by Mr. Lapine. (11/16/87) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

M. Butterfly—John Lithgow and B. D. Wong in a new play by David Henry Hwang. Directed by John Dexter. Previews through Saturday, March 19. Opens officially on Sunday, March 20, at 6. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at

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8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—This is as much a celebration of Shakespeare's comedy as a presentation of it, with A. J. Antoon at the helm. The real source of magic lies in the beautiful scenery of Andrew Jackness and the rich, gorgeous score by Michael Ward. (1/25/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3. Special performance for the Equity Fights AIDS Fund on Monday evening, March 21. Closes Sunday, March 27.)

The Music Man—The New York City Opera's lacklustre revival of Meredith Willson's love song to small-town America. With Bob Gunton as a disappointingly colorless Professor Harold Hill. (Reviewed in this issue.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The No-Frills Revue—An unpretentious, jokey little show conceived and directed by Martin Charnin. Most of the lively songs—words and music—were written by Mr. Charnin, and the two funniest sketches were contributed by Thomas Meehan. (2/22/88) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Oil City Symphony—Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny, very musical musical. Mr. Hardwick and Miss Monk, by the way, are alumni of the beguiling "Pump Boys and Dinettes" of blessed memory. (1/18/88) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Penn & Teller—Back with an even tighter version of their wonderful 1985 show, this two-man team of stage-magic farceurs is probably the hippest thing in high culture since Talking Heads went mainstream. Directed by Art Wolff, with cameo appearances by Director of Covert Activities Marc Garland. (12/21/87) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Tuesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performances by Michael Crawford and Sarah Brightman in the leading roles. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Psycho Beach Party—A romp through early-sixties beach-blanket movies, written by Charles Busch and starring Mr. Busch as a Gidget-like figure with a Marnie-like problem. (8/10/87) (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Sarafina!—This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. It is a show about a show that is put on by a brave group of high-school students in Soweto, and that dramatizes the events in their lives. The events are bleak, but the spirits are blazing and the acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (11/9/87) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Shayna Maidel—A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hilter era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson and is enhanced by two extraordinary performances: one from Gordana Rashovich as a concentration-camp survivor and the other from Paul Sparer as the father who failed to get her and her mother out of Poland. The year 1946 is perfectly evoked by William Barclay's setting. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (11/30/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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A Streetcar Named Desire—A revival of the Tennessee Williams classic, with Blythe Danner, Aidan Quinn, Frances McDormand, and Frank Converse. Nikos Psacharopoulos is the director. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Subject of Childhood—A play by Loren-Paul Caplin. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Tuesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

Tamara—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. Pre-happening cocktails and a buffet at intermission are included in the rather hefty ticket price ($90 to $135). (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 307-7171. Nightly, except Thursdays, at 8; cocktails at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2; cocktails at 1:30.)

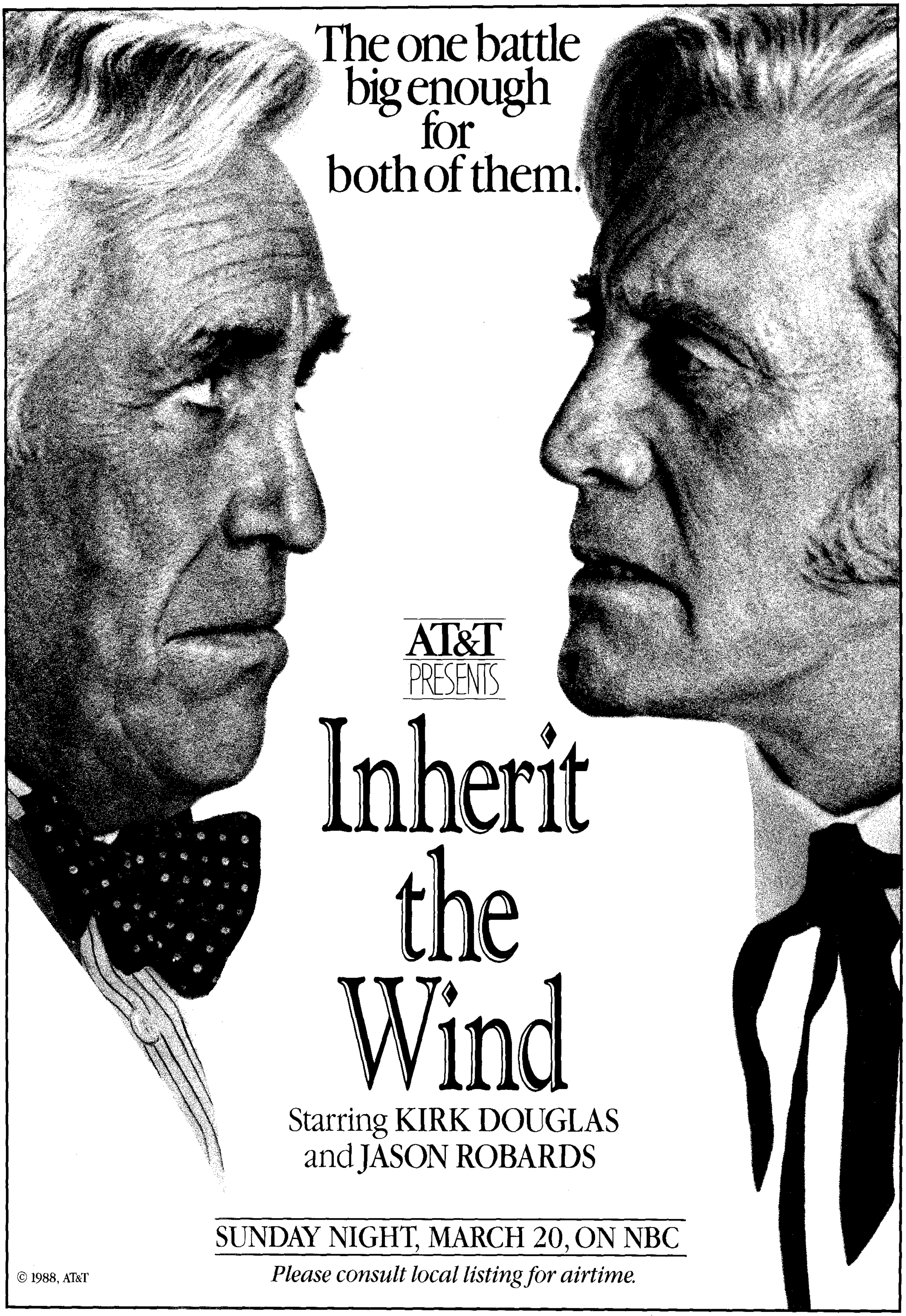
Tapman—Moses Gunn, as a blues musician at the end of his career, is the strong pivot of Karen Jones-Meadows' play, which is somewhat rickety to start with but improves as it goes. With Seret Scott and Dean Irby, among others. (3/14/88) (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

A Walk in the Woods—Lee Blessing's absorbing play is set near Geneva and consists entirely of the conversations, over a year or so, of an American and a Soviet diplomat who have gone there to negotiate an arms treaty. No agreement is reached, but a friendship grows and deepens. Under the direction of Des McAnuff, Sam Waterston and Robert Prosky give performances as distinguished as the roles themselves. (3/14/88) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Wenceslas Square—This play by the late Larry Shue, about an American professor and one of his students in Prague in 1974, is insubstantial but, under the imaginative direction of Jerry Zaks, always fascinating, whether funny or sad. Four fine actors appear as the many characters, Czech and American. (3/14/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Woman in Mind—Alan Ayckbourn, the English dramatist, has written a comedy about a woman who sporadically departs from reality for a world of her own, and he has done it with such wit that it takes the audience quite a while to realize that her mental unbalance is more serious than it first appears to be. Stockard Channing is fine in the leading role, and she is ably supported by Daniel Gerroll, Simon Jones, Remak Ramsay, Patricia Conolly, and Michael Countryman, among other good actors. Lynne Meadow directed. (2/29/88) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

Long Runs—BROADWAY BOUND: Neil Simon retains his accustomed skill at comedy but has wisely suppressed his weakness for surefire gags in a touching and unexpectedly serious study of a family—presumably the playwright's—as it begins to fall apart in Brooklyn in the nineteen-forties. Gene Saks directed. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** A musical version of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Score by Andrew Lloyd Webber, choreography by Gillian Lynne, and direction (and some lyrics) by Trevor Nunn. A superb spectacle, which may run for many more years and give cats the right to vote and hold office. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,608 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FENCES:** Billy Dee Williams now has the lead in August Wilson's powerful play. Lloyd Richards directed. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Pleasantly old-fashioned choreography by the late Gower Champion and a few classic songs enliven an otherwise inert pastiche of the Warner Brothers movie that made Ruby Keeler a star. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** A silly chestnut of a British musical, dating back to the thirties. With Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Gary Morris and Anthony Crivello star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE NERD:** This farce by Larry Shue is a source of laughter from beginning to end. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first



The one battle big enough for both of them.

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play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Bittersuite—A pleasant revue of songs about middle age by Elliot Weiss (music) and Michael Champagne (lyrics). (Palsson's Supper Club, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 5:30 and 8.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting **the desert song**, by Sigmund Romberg. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

Liliane Montevecchi on the Boulevard—A one-woman show. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Nightly, except Tuesdays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 5. Closes Sunday, April 3.)

Odd Jobbers—A fifty-minute show written and performed by Michael Heintzman, Terry Hempleman, and Marguerite Kuhn. A presentation of the Lunchtime Humorists Series. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Thursdays and Fridays at 1.)

Opera Ensemble of New York—Presenting a revival of **a little night music**, Stephen Sondheim's 1973 musical. Staged by John J. D. Sheehan. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. Wednesdays and Fridays at 8, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 27. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

DANCE

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—Tuesday through Friday evenings, March 15-18: "Septet," "Shards," and "Pictures." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 19; Sunday matinée and evening, March 20; and Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, March 22-23: "Doubles," "Eleven," and "Grange Eve." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 2. Through Sunday, March 27.)

Lar Lubovitch Dance Company—A two-week engagement—Tuesday, March 15, at 7:30, and Wednesday and Thursday, March 16-17, at 8: "Musette" (première), "Of My Soul" (première), and "Concerto Six Twenty-Two." With the Solisti New York Chamber Orchestra, Ransom Wilson conducting. . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 8; Saturday, March 19, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, March 20, at 3: "North Star," "Concerto Six Twenty-Two" (with Solisti New York), and "A Brahms Symphony." . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, March 22-23, at 8: "Cavalcade," "Musette," and "A Brahms Symphony." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Through Sunday, March 27.)

Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble—A program of new and repertory works. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, W. 120th St. and Riverside Dr. 864-2929. Wednesday through Friday, March 16-18, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, March 19-20, at 2 and 8.)

Sanjukta Panigrahi—In a program of Indian Orissi dance. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A neat-as-a-pin cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. Daugherty & Field, a song-and-comedy team, perform Wednesdays through Saturdays at six-thirty. **jim morris,** a takeoff artist who is best known for his ability to simulate the thought processes and speech patterns of Ronald Reagan, will be here starting Tuesday, March 22, to do impressions of all the guys running for Reagan's seat.

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Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—On the back wall of this club, there is a neon version of the Manhattan skyline, with a crescent moon and two stars attendant upon it—one of the best examples of inert-gas folk art we know of. Thrushes are in season here: **nancy wilson** sings Tuesday through Sunday, March 15-20, and **carmen mc rae** holds forth starting Tuesday, March 22. Mondays are big-band nights: March 14 belongs to saxophonist **joe roccisano's** crowd and March 21 to Lynn Welshman's Tentet. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Music for many kinds of people, including unreconstructed folkies, rock-and-roll fundamentalists, Village bopcats, and followers of **lyle lovett,** a young country singer from East Texas whose tales of available women and male fantasists contain varying amounts of cynicism and moonshine. He performs on Monday, March 14. The **fugs,** a local entity whose ringleaders are **ed sanders** and **tuli kupferberg,** have the floor on Saturday, March 19. The Turtle Island String Quartet, which features violinist **darol anger,** plays on Monday, March 21. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A crowded, duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, horn players compete for your ear with professional conversationalists. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Three Memphis-born hard-boppers—tenor saxophonist **george coleman,** pianist **harold mabern,** and bassist **jamil nasser**—perform through Saturday, March 19; trumpeter **danny moore** leads a trio on Sunday, March 20; and starting Monday, March 21, pianist **richie beirach** and bassist **ron mc clure** will be in charge. First set at nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Everything about this club is nice; the long rows of tables covered with pink linen, the bijou bandstand, the view from the bar of the bandstand, and the view out the window of Vaux & Withers' gabled Victorian courthouse. **hamiet bluiett,** the bearded baritone voice of the World Saxophone Quartet, leads his Telepathic Big Band on Mondays. **sammy price,** the veteran Texas-born piano thumper, directs a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, March 15-20. Music from nine. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**george shearing** is in the little principality known as the Café Carlyle, transmitting Porter and Parker and Weill and himself ("Lullaby of Birdland") through his fingertips and his swaying shoulders. **lynn seaton** is his bassist. Sets at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through a heavy-duty steel door, through a green Plexiglas door, down a long, narrow, fun-house passageway (mirrors in which you can watch yourself multiply; corrugated-metal siding that you can riffle), and down a flight of stairs, you'll find this velvet-and-mirror-walled *boîte.* **al grey,** a Basie man for many years and a master of plunger-style trombone, directs a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, March 15-20; **mary wilson,** who sang and shimmied with the Supremes from beginning to end, will be in action starting Tuesday, March 22. Mondays are in the hands of guitarist **les paul.** Music from eight. Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Once a truck warehouse, this SoHo establishment now provides space for palm trees to mature in and for non-trucking types to eat and drink and listen to good pianists. The schedule: Tuesday and Wednesday, March 15-16, John Weiss; Thursday through Saturday, March 17-19, **vladimir shafranov;** and Tuesday and Wednesday, March 22-23, **michael weiss.** Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A room where the tenth letter of the alphabet (uncapped and disguised as a quarter note) turns up often: on doors, window shades, matchbooks. It's also a room with a view (of Broadway) and with jazz (mostly of the mainstream type). **john pizzarelli,** a guitarist whose models include his easygoing dad, Bucky, and a singer whose inspirations include Nat Cole ("Hit That Jive, Jack" and "This Will Make You Laugh" are in his repertoire), is here on Thursdays with his trio. The rest of the schedule: Mondays, pianist **dick hyman;** Tuesday, March 15, pianist Jeanne Matisse; Wednesday, March 16, violinist **andy stein's** trio; Friday, March 18, singer-pianist **richard rodney bennett;** and Saturday, March 19, singer–co-proprietor Judy Barnett's trio. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A cozy room for singers and their followers, cheek by jowl with the Iroquois Hotel. On Friday, March 18, **barbara lea** sings with a stellar firm of traditionalists known as Mr. Tram Associates; they are pianist and singer **daryl sherman,** saxophonist **loren schoenberg,** and cornettist **dick sudhalter. judy kreston** sings on Saturdays. Shows at nine and eleven Mondays through Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Turn-of-the-century New York Sunday *Herald* posters and Hirschfeld caricatures on the walls, and, next to the brass-railed partition between the bar and the dining room, a modern Steinway. Pianist David Leonhardt works with **ray drummond,** one of the best bassists in the business, Tuesday through Saturday, March 15-19; **john bunch** and **phil flanigan** swing into action on Tuesday, March 22. Music from about nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Probably the only place in town that features avant-garde jazz, advanced rock, Breathe Easy medicinal tea, homemade yogurt, and smoothies. **rashied ali,** John Coltrane's drummer during the Master's experimental Late Period, leads a quartet on Mondays; bassist **reggie workman,** another former Coltrane hand, brings in his ensemble on Tuesday, March 15; a quintet run by drummer **sunny murray** performs on Wednesday, March 16; Thursday and Friday, March 17-18, belong to the **willem breuker kollektief,** a nine-man Dutch ensemble that makes charming and funny music out of assorted classical and folk materials. Music after nine.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Texas-like in significant respects, though not in the open-spaces-and-clear-sight-lines department, in which it is New York-like. The schedule: Monday, March 14, the **luther allison** blues band; Tuesday, March 15, the Wild Blue Marlins; Wednesday, March 16, a benefit for Hospital Audiences, Inc., with **johnny copeland** and others; Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, the New Riders of the Purple Sage, the long-running hippie-cowboy spinoff of the Grateful Dead; and Monday, March 21, bluesmen **LONNIE BROOKS** and **SON SEALS.** Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Unicorns and lions on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and five hot-jazz boys on the bandstand. They are directed by a fleet young Django Reinhardt admirer named **FRANK VIGNOLA. MICHELE BAUTIER** is the guest singer. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A spiffy uptown bar and restaurant, with signed photographs of some swinging non-musicians on the walls (Reggie Jackson smiling shyly, Dave Winfield tuning up in the cage) and some heavy hitters on the bandstand. **MC COY TYNER,** a thundering, driving pianist who likes to keep the sustain pedal to the floor, leads a group on Friday and Saturday, March 18-19. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland) in the theatre district, and not a bad place to calm down in if, for instance, you happen to have just dropped a week's wages by taking the missus and your aunt from Macon to see a Broadway musical. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Up-to-the-minute rock in a half-century-old ballroom. It's a place for people who don't mind taking their rock standing up; the few seats that exist—in the balcony—are reserved for the usual suspects. Thursday, March 17, the Wolfe Tones; Friday, March 18, the Godfathers and the Nils; Saturday, March 19, the **WOODENTOPS;** and Tuesday, March 22, Ivory Coast pop star Alpha Blondy. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African pop bands, reggae people, zydeco outfits, and salsa ensembles all pass through this former luncheonette. Argentine tenor saxophonist **GATO BARBIERI,** who was once of the high-energy Pharoah Sanders camp and now turns out fairly subdued Latin funk, leads a band Tuesday through Thursday, March 15-17; **LOREMIL MACHADO & THE SARAVA BAHIA BAND** hold forth on Friday and Saturday, March 18-19; **ASTRUD GILBERTO,** one of the softest voices in town, begins a three-night visit on Tuesday, March 22. Music from eight Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Speakeasy, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—Outside, on the boulevards of Greenwich Village, heedless local youths and tourists from New Jersey make mad music; inside, dulcimers are hammered, fiddles are fiddled, folk songs are sung, and Professor Irwin Corey sometimes pops his head in to explain what a light bulb is (a thing that sucks up darkness until it goes out). Banjo ace **TONY TRISCHKA** and his bluegrass band, **SKYLINE,** will be here on Thursday, March 17; **DAVID MASSENGILL,** a dulcimer player and a singer of politically charged folktales, performs Friday and Saturday, March 18-19. Music from about eight-thirty. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club—but not so crowded, as Yogi Berra said of another night spot, that nobody comes here anymore. **STEVE LACY,** a thoroughly modern authority on the soprano saxophone (he's credited with inspiring Coltrane to take it up), leads a sextet Tuesday through Sunday, March 15-20. The **JAZZTET,** a hard-bop sextet created by tenor saxophonist **BENNY GOLSON** and flugelhornist Art Farmer in the late fifties, will be around for two weeks starting Tuesday, March 22. **TERENCE BLANCHARD,** a young New Orleans-born trumpeter, pinch-hits for Farmer. Mondays are reserved for pianist **ELIANE ELIAS'S** trio. Shows from ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A low-ceilinged, plain-but-functional blues and rock outpost. The decorative flourishes include pictures of Big Joe Turner, a Mets pennant, roadhouse neon, and a fiddle-footed black cat, which roams the premises looking for a seat better than the one it just abandoned. The schedule: Mondays, the **SURREAL MC COYS,** a local country band; Tuesday, March 15, the Special Guests and others; Wednesday, March 16, the Ned Sublette band; and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, the Kinsey Report, a blues band from Gary, Indiana. Shows from nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Downstairs, in the gym-size room where hepcat d.j. Symphony Sid used to spend his Monday evenings hosting Latin-jazz shows, Latin music is still the rule on Mondays. On March 14, flutist **DAVE VALENTIN** will take a solo or two with bands led by **MONGO SANTAMARIA** and **MANNY OQUENDO.** Activity from nine-thirty. **BABA OLATUNJI** and his African drumming and dancing troupe perform on Friday and Saturday, March 18-19. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, where business and conversation are often at boom level, pianist-singer **BROOKS KERR,** a student of pre-bop styles and customs, works with bassist **BOB FIELD** Tuesdays through Sundays from ten. Pianist Liz Magnes takes the six-to-ten shift Friday through Sunday, March 18-20.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—One of the few places below the surface of New York that deserve landmark status. It's also one of the few places anywhere that have a notable (if that's the right word) light fixture—one that Charles Mingus K.O.'d while trying to reason with the proprietor and that the proprietor, a preservationist as well as a businessman, decided to leave in Mingus-ized condition. Two alto saxophonists—**RICHIE COLE,** a forty-year-old live wire who came up through the big bands of Buddy Rich and Lionel Hampton, and **HANK CRAWFORD,** a Ray Charles alumnus—share a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, March 15-20; vibraphonist **BOBBY HUTCHERSON** brings in a foursome on Tuesday, March 22. Mondays belong to **MEL LEWIS'S** big band. Music after ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Those who can resist the temptations of the large barroom here—pinball, video games, a dialogue with a budding logical positivist from Columbia U.—will find another, smaller room, where jazz musicians hold sway. Drummer **MICHAEL CARVIN'S** quintet is in charge Wednesday through Sunday, March 16-20; **MICHELLE HENDRICKS,** daughter of bop vocalist Jon Hendricks, sings with a trio starting Wednesday, March 23. Music from about nine. Dining.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—Pasta and jazz. The latter emanates from a passageway between a front-room bar and a back room reserved for trenchermen. **TAL FARLOW,** a wonderful guitarist whether he's playing at lickety-split bebop speed or at a more relaxed gait, works with bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI** through Saturday, March 19. On Sundays, the long-running duo of **GENE BERTONCINI** (guitar) and **MICHAEL MOORE** (bass) have the floor. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Frank Patterson—With assisting artists. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Marty Ehrlich—With the Emergency Peace Ensemble. (Alternative Museum, 17 White St. 966-4444. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Douglas Dunn and Dancers—The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Thursday through Sunday, March 17-20, at 8:30. Through Sunday, March 27.

Tamar Rogoff—With Nurit Tilles. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Friday, March 18, at 7 and 9; Saturday, March 19, at 4, 7, and 9; and Sunday, March 20, at 7 and 9.)

INXS—With Public Image Ltd. (Radio City Music Hall. Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, at 8.)

"The Jazz Section"—With Dan Froot, Dan Hurlin, and others. (P.S. 122. Friday, March 18, at 10, and Saturday and Sunday, March 19-20, at 8. Through Sunday, April 3.)

Bruce Cockburn—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Saturday, March 19, at 8.

Kirk Nurock—Jazz Center of New York, 380 Lafayette St. 505-5660. Saturday, March 19, at 8.

Patrick Street—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Saturday, March 19, at 8.

Hilton Ruiz—Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Saturday, March 19, at 8. No tickets necessary.

Bill Obrecht—With the Manhattan Marimba Quartet, Jed Distler, and others. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Monday and Tuesday, March 21-22, at 8.)

Cleo Laine and John Dankworth—With the Dankworth Quartet. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Wednesday, March 23, at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Varujan Boghosian—New collages. Through Saturday, March 19. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Fanny Brennan—Very small surreal paintings. Through April 1. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

Susan Crile—Abstract pastels. Through March 26. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Luise Kaish—Abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

David Levine—A new set of caricatures. Through Saturday, March 19. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Kikuo Saito / Mark Davis—Color-field paintings. / Still-life paintings and drawings. Through April 1. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Lorraine Shemesh—Paintings and drawings of, among other things, a beach ball, bowling shoes, and pastries; also, quilts with scenes from a dance class and of a swimming pool. Through March 30. (Stone, 48 E. 86th St.)

Hunt Slonem—Grisaille paintings housed in old gilt frames and depicting groups of tropical birds and animals. Through April 2. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

Pat Steir—New paintings. Through March 31. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Bob Thompson (1937-66)—Figurative paintings. Through April 9. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Dorothy Zilka—Nine landscapes with tall, curving trees and squat hills; the mediums include oil stick and torn paper. Through Saturday, March 19. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Group Show—A strong selection of contemporary Spanish art, mounted in homage to the late Madrid dealer Fernando Vijande. Artists include Zush, José María Sicilia, and Luis Gordillo. Through Saturday, March 19. (Spanish Institute, 684 Park Ave., at 68th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Milet Andrejevic—Allegorical paintings in which Greek gods mingle with habitués of Central Park. Through March 30. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Arman—Thirteen paintings to which the artist has affixed a great number of paintbrushes. Through April 9. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Glen Baxter / Jan Knap—Humorous pastels of gravity-defying people and objects. / Narrative paintings with religious references. Through Saturday, March 19. (Holly Solo-

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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mon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jake Berthot—New abstract paintings. Through March 30. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Ronald Bladen (1918-88) / **Anne Ryan** (1889-1954)—Wood-and-aluminum wall sculptures in what has become a memorial exhibit for the artist, who died recently. / Paper-and-fabric collages. Through Saturday, March 19. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jack Bush (1909-77)—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper. Through April 2. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

George Condo—Paintings and drawings. Through April 2. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Martha Diamond—Abstractions from cityscapes. Through March 26. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Morris Graves—A survey of works on paper dating from 1937 to 1986. Through March 26. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Michel Haas—Drawings characterized by figures shaded against a blizzard of short marks. Through April 9. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St.)

Minoru Kawabata—Abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Samuel Kornberg—Fifteen surreal paintings and works on paper, many with Biblical or historical references. Through Wednesday, *March 23. (Deutsch, 20 W. 57th St.)*

Harry Marinsky—Stylized figures in bronze, most of them two or three feet tall. Through March 26. (Hammer, 33 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Moskowitz / **Ronald Davis**—Large-scale figurative paintings and drawings. / Geometric paintings. Through March 26. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Meret Oppenheim (1913-86)—Paintings, mostly. Through April 9. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Lincoln Perry—Studies for his mural in St. Louis based on Homer's "Odyssey," plus other paintings. Through March 30. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Dorothea Rockburne / **Arthur Gibbons**—Paintings. Through April 2. / New polychrome steel sculptures. Through Saturday, March 19. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

James Rosati (1912-88) / **Grover Mouton**—Fifty-two sculptures in stone and metal, plus drawings, in this survey, which the artist oversaw before his death last month. / Large-scale expressionistic drawings. Through March 26. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Janet Stayton and Robert Janz—Paintings and works on paper. Through April 23. (Heesy, 50 W. 57th St.)

William Turnbull—Recent bronze sculptures. Through April 2. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Robin Utterback—*Mixed-medium collages and* constructions. Through March 26. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Ger van Elk—New work. Through April 1. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Paule Vézelay (1892-1984)—Nonobjective works on paper and minimalist wire-and-thread constructions. Through April 2. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jane Wilson / **Polly Kraft**—Land- and seascapes. / Still-lifes. Through March 30. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Philip Wofford / **Luis Cruz Azaceta**—Densely painted abstractions. / Drawings. Through April 2. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

Albert York—Landscape, still-life, and figure paintings from the past twenty-five years. Through March 30. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

Group Shows—At **david findlay, jr.,** 41 E. 57th St.: Paintings by Gloucester and Rockport artists working between 1880 and 1975—Gifford Beal, William Paxton, Claire Shuttleworth, and others. Through April 2. . . . **galerie lelong,** 20 W. 57th St.: Sculptures, drawings, and photographs by Gordon Matta-Clark (1945-78) and a number of artists in his circle. Through April 16. . . . **lamagna,** 50 W. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and photographs that have altar motifs as a starting point, by Ana Mendieta, Joseph Beuys, Komar & Melamid, Neil Winokur, and others. Through March 26. . . . **midtown,** 11 E. 57th St.: Studies and paintings for WPA-sponsored murals. Artists include Isabel Bishop, Paul Cadmus, and Ben Shahn. Through April 9.

Sculpture—Works from the sixties (by Richard Artschwager, Donald Judd, Andy Warhol, and others) and the eighties (by Jenny Holzer, Jeff Koons, Allan McCollum, and others). Through March 26. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Ashley Bickerton—Nine three-dimensional paintings. Through April 2. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Sandro Chia—Paintings and drawings from the past ten years. Through April 5. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Dale Chihuly—New glass sculptures, many of which resemble seashells. Through March 26. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Elba Damast / **Larry Holmes**—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper. / Pastels. Through April 2. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St.)

Nassos Daphnis—Large, striking configurations of circles and spheres; the medium is enamel on canvas. Through March 26. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Lauren Ewing—Three very large sculptures in which rusted steel plates are juxtaposed with colorful enamel cabinets. Through March 26. (Brown, 560 Broadway.)

Rafael Ferrer—Paintings of genre scenes in Santo Domingo, where the artist lives about *half the year. Through April 6.* (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Cecily Barth Firestein—Monotypes. Through March 26. (Phoenix, 568 Broadway.)

Cristos Gianakos—A very large ramp framework made of wood, steel, and glass. Also, abstract paintings on Mylar. Through April 2. (Siegeltuch, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St.)

Michael Gitlin—An artist who tames masses of short planks of lumber; in this show, one sculpture wraps around itself, another spills out of the wall. Through March 26. (Davis, 568 Broadway. . . . ¶ Stark, at the same address, is showing drawings by Gitlin. Opens at noon.)

Jeff Gompertz—Paintings *of imaginary objects,* such as a weapon of the future. Through April 2. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Duncan Hannah—Recent paintings. Through April 6. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Tom Hatch—Freestanding abstract copper sculptures. Through March 26. (Beitzel, 113 Greene St.)

Clinton Hill—Constructions and assemblages made of overlapping parts of either handmade paper or painted wood. Through April 7. (Pearl, 420 West Broadway.)

Will Insley / **John Hejduk**—Abstract paintings. *Through Saturday, March 19.* / Colored-pencil drawings of an imaginary city. Through April 9. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

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Jonathan Lasker—Abstractions incorporating grid patterns. Through March 26. (Audiello, 142 Greene St.)

Jack Lembeck—Images of dolphins, pineapples, and life preservers are painted over abstract canvases. Through March 26. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Tom Lieber—Large Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through March 31. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

Charles Luce / **Paul Caranicas**—An installation. / Landscapes juxtaposed with paintings of demolished artillery bunkers and other military structures from the World Wars. Through March 30. (Schreiber-Cutler, 171 Spring St.)

Richard Milani—Diptychs, triptychs, and single-panel works based on movie stills—i.e., Busby Berkeley star-and-flower patterns and Russian sailors' heads from "The Battleship Potemkin." Through Saturday, March 19. (Rubin, 155 Spring St.)

John Miller—Conceptual work. Through March 26. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Nachume Miller—Large-scale oil-and-encaustic landscapes, and preparatory drawings. Through Saturday, March 19. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Frank Moore—A survey of his paintings. Through March 26. (Allen, 560 Broadway.)

Olivier Mosset—Large minimal paintings. Through March 26. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

Joyce Robins / **Robert Sussman**—Rough-textured freestanding geometric bronzes. / Nonobjective paintings. Through April 2. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Tim Rollins—Eighty framed pages from the first chapter of Kafka's "Amerika," embellished with gold watercolors; a stack of Bibles too high to swear on; and other literary-minded works. Eighteen young students from the Bronx assisted the artist. Through April 2. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

Georges Rousse—A series of large cibachromes depicting various empty rooms, the walls of which the artist painted red. Through April 2. (Cadot, 470 Broome St.)

David Salle—Recent paintings. Through April 2. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Fred Sandback—Drawings and prints by a minimalist sculptor. Through Saturday, March 19. (Nolan, 560 Broadway.) . . . ¶ Four new sculptures. Through June 18. (Dia Art Foundation, 155 Mercer St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Jan Sawka—New paintings. Through March 26. (DiLaurenti, 383 West Broadway.)

Miriam Schapiro—Figurative paintings. The central work shows three dancers dressed, *from top hat to tap shoes, in multipatterned* fabric collage. Through April 12. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

Joel Shapiro—Works on paper. Through March 31. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Judith Shea—Classical figures in cast bronze, marble, and stone. Through March 26. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Sandi Slone—Abstract paintings with a gritty texture. Through April 2. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

Tom Uttech—Landscapes of wilderness areas in the upper Midwest. Through March 26. (Davidson, 415 West Broadway.)

Robin Winters—Works on paper dating from 1973 to the present. Through April 9. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Sculpture—Works by a dozen women artists in a show entitled "The Decline of Sexual Stereotypes in Post-Feminist Sculpture." Through April 2. (A.I.R., 63 Crosby St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Dennis Adams—A wall sculpture entitled "Falling Water." Through March 27. (Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Cathey Billian—A light-and-glass installation. Through April 9. (Glass Workshop, 142 Mul-

Baku straw hat. $75. British umbrella. $85. Indian silk choppa scarf. $9.50. Cotton weave belt. $22.50. Washed cotton sport shirt. $89.50. Cotton seersucker pleated trousers. $86. Silk sports jacket. $548.

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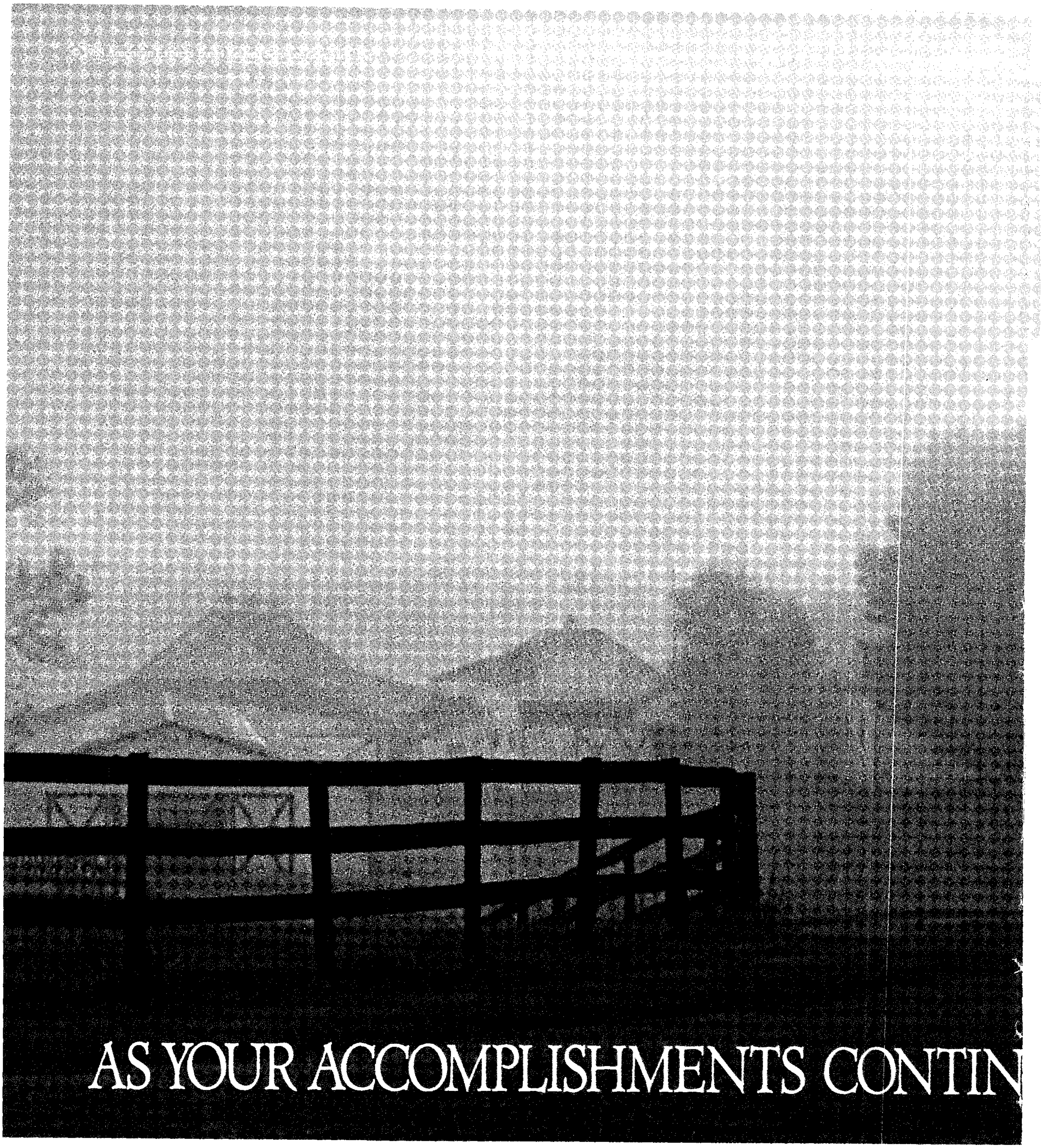
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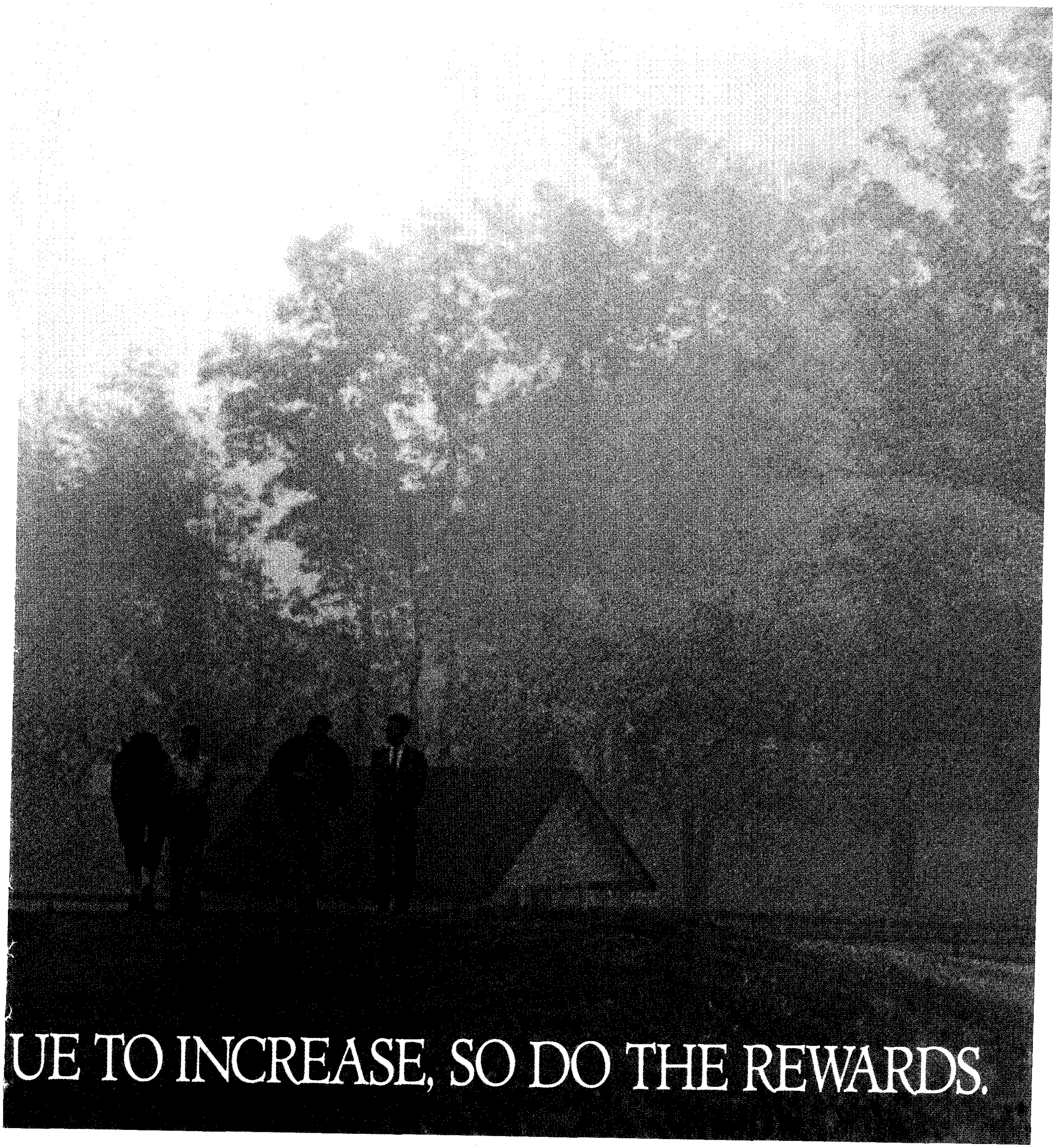
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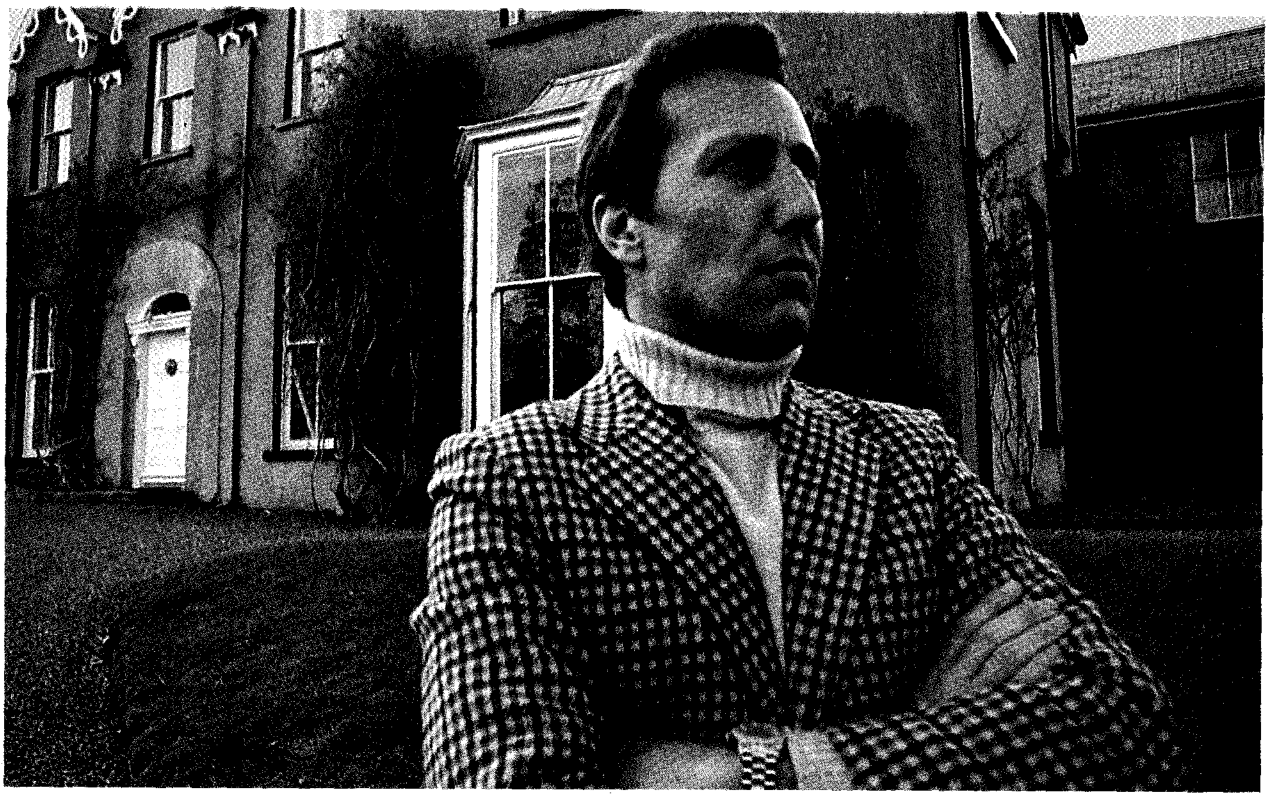

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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berry St. Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 6; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Richard Bogart—Romantic landscapes. Through April 2. (Natkin, 395 Broadway.)

Robert Cronbach / Mary Ellen Doyle—Terracotta sculptures. / Watercolors. Through March 27. (Humphrey, 37 E. 7th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Brett De Palma—Twelve figures from Greek and Roman mythology painted on tin. Through March 31. (Briet, 377 Broome St., between Mott and Mulberry Sts. Open Sundays.)

David Diao—New paintings. Through April 10. (Postmasters, 66 Avenue A, near 4th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Rodney Graham—Three wall sculptures incorporating volumes of Sigmund Freud's "Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis," "Collected Papers," and "The Complete Psychological Works," which appear, spines showing, nestled amid sculptural volumes of brass and steel, polished copper, and painted wood. Through Thursday, March 17. (Burgin, 270 Lafayette St.)

Rodney Alan Greenblat—Relief paintings depicting the artist's cartoonish characters on various madcap adventures. Through April 3. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Marcia Hafif—Flesh-colored paintings. Through Saturday, March 19. (Pretto, 103 Sullivan St. Opens at 1.)

Tom Radloff—Diagrammatic paintings and emblematic wall reliefs. Through Sunday, March 20. (Loughelton, 19 Second Ave., at 1st St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Mark Schwartz—Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through April 9. (Baum, 109 Hudson St. Open Mondays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Tom Baril and Suzanne Williamson—Black-and-white photographs. Through May 7. (Ledel, 168 Mercer St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Cecil Beaton (1904-80)—A two-gallery retrospective of works by the fashion and celebrity photographer. Through April 23. (Fashion Institute of Technology, Shirley Goodman Resource Center, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. Open Tuesday evenings until 9. . . . ¶ Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 to 6:30; Wednesdays, 10 to 8:30; Fridays, 10 to 5; and Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

Margaret Bourke-White (1904-71)—A retrospective of works by the photojournalist who did *Life's* first cover. Through May 1. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Brassaï (1899-1984)—Thirty-three photographs documenting Picasso and his environs from 1932 to 1944; the work is on loan from the Musée Picasso, in Paris. Through April 23. (French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. Mondays through Fridays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 4.)

Carlo Gajani / Pia Schutzmann—Cibachrome prints of the Po Valley. / Abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

David Heald—Black-and-white photographs of twelfth-century French abbeys. Through April 2. (Ward, 9 E. 93rd St. Open Mondays.)

Grace Knowlton—Photographs, including hand-painted prints of the artist's outdoor sculptures. Through April 2. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Jerome Liebling—A retrospective of photographs that document working-class life. Through Saturday, March 19. (Photofind, 138 Spring St.)

Manual—Works by photographic collaborators Suzanne Bloom and Ed Hill, who fed photographs and texts into a computer, manipulated them with a sophisticated computer-graphics program, and then made these conventional photographs of the resulting video displays. Through March 26. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Arthur Tress—Photographs. Through April 16. (Twining, 568 Broadway.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of Fragonard paintings and drawings, which has travelled here from the Grand Palais, in Paris. Through May 8. Complementing this is the display of "The Progress of Love" at the Frick Collection (see below). (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of three reconstructed outdoor installations by Vito Acconci that are meant to be climbed through, sat on, whatever. One of them uses a half-dozen formerly abandoned cars. Through May 3. . . . ¶ Drawings by Paul Cézanne taken from five sketchbooks that are on loan from the Kunstmuseum in Basel. Through June 5. . . . ¶ A show of prints scanning the political and social views of more than a hundred artists working in this country during the past twenty-five years, among them Miriam Schapiro, Jane Dickson, Romare Bearden, and Hans Haacke. Through April 19. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The permanent collection is the main reason for a visit just now. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

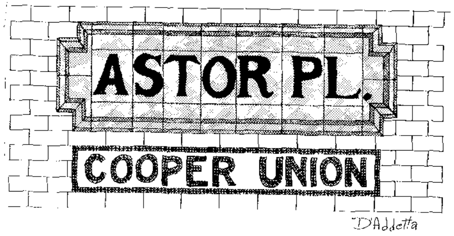
Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit of Richard Artschwager's paintings and sculptures from the past twenty-five years. Through April 3. . . . ¶ A Charles Sheeler retrospective offering paintings, drawings, and photographs. Through April 17. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A display of primitive wood carvings by natives of the South Pacific Island New Ireland. Through May 9. . . . ¶ A survey of prints by Alex Katz. Through April 11. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Artifacts from Carthage, including seventeen pictorial mosaics. Through May 1. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—A show of a hundred paintings and sculptures by twenty-eight artists who have been nominated for Academy-Institute art awards. Among the candidates are Elizabeth Sandvig, Marja Vallila, and David Mann. Through March 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A survey of present-day Scandinavian crafts comprising the work of thirty-five artisans. Through April 24. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)



Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A display of Swedish silver covering a three-hundred-and-fifty-year period and including flatware that graced the tables of King Karl Johan and Queen Desideria, Prince Gustav Adolf and Princess Sybilla, and King Carl and Queen Silvia. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; and Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—All fourteen canvases of Fragonard's "The Progress of Love" are on view (as usual), complementing the comprehensive show of the artist's work at the Metropolitan. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of works by Leonid Pasternak (1862-1945), the Russian Impressionist painter and the father of Boris Pasternak. Genre scenes, landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits (of, for instance, Lenin, Tolstoy, and Einstein). Through May 22. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The Drake Manuscript consists of two hundred captioned watercolors of life in the West Indies, thought to be the work of someone on the voyages of Sir Francis Drake. The manuscript is on view along with transparencies of the individual pages. Through May 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Photographs by Richard S. Roberts documenting black middle-class life in South Carolina in the twenties and thirties. Through April 3. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is *362-1911*; for Avery Fisher Hall *874-2424*; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—*Monday, March 14, at 7:* "Die Walküre," with Hildegard Behrens, Leonie Rysanek, Waltraud Meier, Peter Hofmann, and Theo Adam; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 15, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Quittmeyer, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 8: "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," with Gwendolyn Bradley, Roberta Alexander, Martine Dupuy, Placido Domingo, and Simon Estes; Charles Dutoit. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 17, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Judith Haddon, Stefka Mineva, Wieslaw Ochman, and Vladimir Popov; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Quittmeyer, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 12:30: "Die Walküre," with Hildegard Behrens, Leonie Rysanek, Waltraud Meier, Peter Hofmann, and Theo Adam; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 8: "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," with Gwendolyn Bradley, Roberta Alexander, Martine Dupuy, Placido Domingo, and Simon Estes; Charles Dutoit. . . . ¶ Monday, March 21, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Judith Haddon, Stefania Toczyska, Wieslaw Ochman, and Vladimir Popov; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 22, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Quittmeyer, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 23, at 7: "Die Walküre," with Johanna Meier, Sabine Hass, Gail Gilmore, Peter Hofmann, and Theo Adam; James Levine. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

John Brownlee Opera Theatre—Haydn's "La Fedeltà Premiata," in English, conducted by

Thomas Dunn and staged by Lou Galterio. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 279-4200. Wednesday, March 16, and Friday, March 18, at 8; and Sunday, March 20, at 2:30.)

Amato Opera—Presenting a new production of "The Magic Flute." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, at 7:30, and Sunday, March 20, at 2:30. Through Sunday, April 24.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Klaus Tennstedt conducting a Bach-Bartók-Dvořák program, with Pinchas Zukerman, violin and viola. (Avery Fisher Hall. Thursday through Saturday, March 17-19, at 8, and Tuesday, March 22, at 7:30.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Erich Leinsdorf conducting, with Marc-André Hamelin, piano, and Michael Stairs, organ. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra—Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting an all-Scandinavian program, with Cho-Liang Lin, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Philharmonia Orchestra of London—Giuseppe Sinopoli conducting. At **carnegie hall:** Thursday, March 17, at 8: Bruckner's Eighth Symphony. . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 8: A Mahler-Wagner-Schumann program, with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone. . . . **avery fisher hall:** Sunday, March 20, at 3: With Salvatore Accardo, violin, in an all-Brahms program.

"Meet the Moderns"—Lukas Foss conducting the Brooklyn Philharmonic. With Sharon Isbin, classical guitarist, and William Brown, tenor. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, March 18, at 8. For information about tickets, call 1-718 636-4120.)

Korean Symphony Orchestra of New York—Kyung-Hum Shim conducting a benefit concert, with Sung-Ju Lee, violin, and Jung-Won Park, soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 23, at 8.)

Philharmonia Virtuosi—Richard Kapp conducting, with Michala Petri, recorder. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

New York Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting, with Syoko Aki, violin. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Saturday, March 19, at 8, and Sunday, March 20, at 3.)

Israel Chamber Orchestra—Yoav Talmi conducting, with Jard van Nes, mezzo-soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 20, at 3.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducting. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, March 23, at 8.)

New York Choral Society—John Daly Goodwin directing, with Susan Neves, soprano; Antoinette Hardin, mezzo-soprano; Richard Croft, tenor; and Jan Opalach, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

St. Thomas Choir—Gerre Hancock directing Bach's "St. Matthew Passion." With the Concert Royal and vocal soloists. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. Tuesday, March 22, at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)

RECITALS

Maurizio Pollini—Piano, in the last two of three all-Beethoven concerts. (Carnegie Hall. Mondays, March 14 and 21, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Tuesday and Wednesday, March 15-16, at 8: A Beethoven-Janáček-Schumann program. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410.) . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 22, at 8: With Murray Perahia, piano. (Alice Tully Hall.)

New York Woodwind Quintet—In the last of a three-concert series. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Leonard Raver—Organ. With Thomas Stacy, horn. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Barbara Blanchard—Soprano, in an all-Poulenc program. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Alessandra Marc—Soprano, in her New York recital début. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Ian Hobson—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Aurora—Chamber music by Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, and Raynor Taylor. With Rebecca Muir, viola. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Thursday, March 17, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

American Brass Quintet—Playing contemporary music. With Barbara Martin, mezzo-soprano, and Benjamin Herman and Jonathan Haas, percussion. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

New York Philomusica—A benefit concert with what the group describes as a fun-and-games program. With guest pianists Roland Hanna and George Plimpton, the latter performing a composition of his own. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, March 17, at 8. For information about tickets, call 580-9933.)

William Moersch—Marimba, in a program of music composed since 1982, including the New York première of Richard Rodney Bennett's Concerto for Marimba and Chamber Orchestra. Donald Spieth will conduct the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra in the Bennett work. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—Chamber music. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Thursday, March 17, at 8. . . . ¶ Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sunday, March 20, at 2.)

Malcolm Bilson and Anner Bylsma—Fortepiano and baroque-period violoncello. (Weill Recital Hall. Friday, March 18, at 8.)

Philip Glass and Ensemble—Performing his score for the 1983 movie "Koyaanisqatsi" at two screenings of the film. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, at 8.)

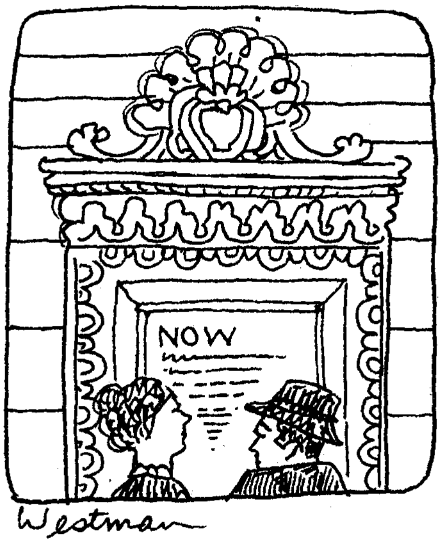
Lockenhaus Festival—Two different Shostakovich-Schubert-Mozart concerts by musicians from Gidon Kremer's Austrian-based festival. With Mr. Kremer and Annette Bik, violin; Gerard Caussè, viola; Ko Iwasaki, cello; Alois Posch, double bass; and Valery Afanassiev, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, at 8.)

Canticum Novum Singers—Harold Rosenbaum conducting a program of music from England. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, March 19, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Spoleto Festival Chamber Music at BAM—With Eliot Fisk, guitar; Paula Robison, flute; and the Meliora Quartet. The fifth in a series of seven concerts. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

René Heredia—Flamenco guitarist. (Weill Recital Hall. Saturday, March 19, at 8:30.)

New Sounds—Presenting contemporary music for piano, string quartet, and synthesizer. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, March 20, at 2.)



Virtuosi Quintet—Chamber music. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. Sunday, March 20, at 2. Tickets are free with museum admission.)

Kathleen Battle—Soprano, with James Levine, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 20, at 3.)

English-Handbell Festival—More than a hundred handbell players ringing more than six hundred handbells. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. and 120th St. Sunday, March 20, at 4. Admission by donation.)

Horacio Gutiérrez—Piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 20, at 7:30.)

Jessye Norman—Soprano, with James Levine, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Monday, March 21, at 8.)

Patricia Spencer—Flute, in a program of five premières. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, March 21, at 8.)

New Music Consort—A program of percussion music. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Monday, March 21, at 8.)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau—Baritone, in the first of three concerts. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, March 22, at 8.)

Santiago Rodriguez—Piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Tuesday, March 22, at 8.)

Michael Rudiakov—Cello, with Shoshana Rudiakov, piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Tuesday, March 22, at 8.)

Note—The Coull String Quartet will give a recital at the Frick Collection (1 E. 70th St.) on Sunday, April 10, at 5. Free tickets, limited to two per applicant, will be issued starting Monday, March 28, in the order that mailed applications are received on that day (not before). A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Cleveland Cavaliers, Monday, March 14, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Atlanta Hawks, Saturday, March 19, at 7:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Milwaukee Bucks, Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Atlanta Hawks, Friday, March 18, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Indiana Pacers, Sunday, March 20, at 1. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Philadelphia 76ers, Tuesday, March 22, at 8.

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Tuesday, March 15. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Washington Capitals, Wednesday, March 16. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Hartford Whalers, Sunday, March 20. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Buffalo Sabres, Tuesday, March 22. (Games begin at 7:35.) . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Quebec Nordiques, Thursday, March 17, at 7:45.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1.

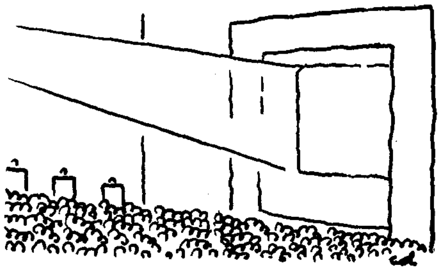
ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—Fritz Weaver, Charles Keating, Swoosie Kurtz, Maria Tucci, and Steven Gilborn reading from the short stories of Latin-American writers (in translations by Alberto Manguel), among them Borges and García Márquez. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Wednesday, March 16, at 6:30.) . . . ¶ Galway Kinnell, Susan Sontag, Josef Skvorecký, Jane Smiley, and Kurt Vonnegut reading from the works of Czech writers (in translation), including Václav Havel and Milan Kundera. (West Side Y, 2 W. 64th St. 787-6557. Friday, March 18, at 8.) . . . ¶ Donald Justice and William Logan reading from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, March 21, at 8.) . . . ¶ Jamaica Kincaid reading from her own short stories. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Wednesday, March 23, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Lecture—I. F. Stone talking about his life and work. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Tuesday, March 22, at 8. For information about tickets, call 741-5690.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 21.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
March 15: "Marius" (1931; directed by Alexander Korda; in French), with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, and Orane Démazis; "Fanny" (1932; Marc Allégret; in French), with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, and Orane Démazis; and César" (1936; Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Raimu, Orane Démazis, and Charpin.
March 16: "Topaze" (1933; Louis Gasnier; in French), with Louis Jouvet; and "Angele" (1934; Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Fernandel, Orane Démazis, and Jean Servais.
March 17: "The Well-Digger's Daughter" (1940; Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Raimu, Fernandel, and Josette Day; and "The Baker's Wife" (1938; Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Raimu.
March 18: At 6, "Marius;" and, at 8:30 and 10:10,"The Tarnished Angels" (1958; Douglas Sirk), with Rock Hudson, Robert Stack, and Dorothy Malone.
March 19-20: At 3:30, "Angele;" at 6, "Marius;" and, at 8:30 and 10:10, "The Tarnished Angels."
March 22: At 6, "Marius;" and, at 8:30 and 10:10, "The Tarnished Angels."
March 23: At 6, "Fanny;" and, at 8:30 and 10:10, "The Tarnished Angels."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Switching Channels" (†). From March 18: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).
Theatre 3: "Frantic" (†).

Gramercy, *Lexington at 23rd.* (475-1660)
Through March 17: "Broadcast News" (†).
From March 18: "D.O.A." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Moonstruck" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).
Theatre 3: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Frantic" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through March 17: "When the Wind Blows" (Jimmy T. Murakami), an animated film.
From March 18: "Hope and Glory" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through March 17: "Moonstruck" (†).
From March 18: "The Milagro Beanfield War" (Robert Redford), with Rubén Blades and Richard Bradford.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Wall Street" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through March 17: "Empire of the Sun" (†).
From March 18: To be announced.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage. From March 18: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor. From March 18: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Broadcast News" (†). From March 18: "D.O.A." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Shoot to Kill" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).
Theatre 2: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Switching Channels" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Hope and Glory"(†). From March 18: "Little Nikita" (Richard Benjamin), with Sidney Poitier and River Phoenix.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through March 17: "Frantic" (†).
From March 18: To be announced.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels. From March 18: "Dominick and Eugene" (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through March 16: "A Month in the Country" (†).
From March 17: "Levy and Goliath" (Gérard Oury; in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Masquerade" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor. From March 18: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).
Theatre 2: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Moonstruck" (†).
Theatre 2: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden" (directed by Michal Goldman; in English and Yiddish), a documentary. From March 16: "Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh" (Paul Cox).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: (Separate admissions) "Jean de Florette" (†) and "Manon of the Spring" (†). From March 18: (Separate admissions) "Manon of the Spring" (†) and "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (†). March 18: "Hero of the Year" (1986; Feliks Falk; in Polish). March 19: "Blind Chance" (1982; Krzysztof Kieslowski; in Polish). March 20: "Sunday Pranks" (1987; Robert Glinski; in Polish) and "The Rat Catcher" (1986; Andrzej Czarnecki; in Polish). March 21: "Magnate" (1987; Filip Bajon; in Polish). March 22: "Train to Hollywood" (1987; Radoslaw Piwowarski; in Polish). March 23: "On the Neman River" (1986; Zbigniew Kuzminski; in Polish).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Fatal Attraction" (†). From March 18: "Dominick and Eugene" (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels. From March 18: "Stand and Deliver" (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: "The Family" (1988 †). From March 18: "Little Nikita" (Richard Benjamin), with Sidney Poitier and River Phoenix.
Theatre 2: "School Daze" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 3: "The Dead" (†).
Theatre 4: "Hope and Glory" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Masquerade" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor. From March 18: To be announced.
Theatre 3: "Shoot to Kill" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through March 17: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).
From March 18: "D.O.A." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
Through March 17: "The Dead" (†).
From March 18: To be announced.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Through March 17: "Anna" (†).
From March 18: To be announced.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
Through March 17: "The Last Minute" (Pupi Avati; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi.
From March 18: "The Two Lives of Mattia Pascal" (in Italian).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through March 17: "The Grand Highway" (Jean-Loup Hubert; in French).
From March 18: "Beatrice" (Bertrand Tavernier; in French).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through March 17: (Separate admissions) "Jean de Florette" (†) and "Manon of the Spring" (†).
From March 18: To be announced.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Girl from Hunan" (Xie Fei and U Lan; in Mandarin).
Theatre 2: "My Life as a Dog" (†).
Theatre 3: "High Tide" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Frida" (1984; Paul Leduc; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Babette's Feast" (Gabriel Axel; in Danish and French).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

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Through March 17: "Shoot to Kill" (†). From March 18: To be announced.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Broadcast News" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "End of the Line" (Jay Russell), with Wilford Brimley and Levon Helm. From March 18: "Stars and Bars" (Pat O'Connor), with Daniel Day Lewis.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).
Theatre 2: "Masquerade" (†).
Theatre 3: Through March 17: "Moonstruck" (†). From March 18 (tentative): "Dominick and Eugene" (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta.
Theatre 4: Through March 17: "The Last Emperor" (†). From March 18 (tentative): "Stand and Deliver" (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.
Theatre 5: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 6: "Frantic" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: "The Dead" (†). From March 18: "Little Nikita" (Richard Benjamin), with Sidney Poitier and River Phoenix.
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage. From March 18: To be announced.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (866-7500)
"Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor. From March 18: "D.O.A." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "School Daze" (Spike Lee). From March 18: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Serpent and the Rainbow" (directed by Wes Craven).
Theatre 2: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor.
Theatre 3: "School Daze" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 4: "Prison" (Renny Harlin).
Theatre 5: Through March 17: "Prison." From March 18: "Little Nikita" (Richard Benjamin), with Sidney Poitier and River Phoenix.
Theatre 6: Through March 17: "Switching Channels" (†). From March 18: "Little Nikita."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Shoot to Kill" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Masquerade" (†).
Theatre 3: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 4: Through March 17: "Fatal Attraction" (†). From March 18: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Action Jackson" (Craig R. Baxley), with Carl Weathers and Craig T. Nelson.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.
Theatre 2: Through March 17: "Frantic" (†). From March 18: "Stand and Deliver" (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through March 17: "Moonstruck" (†).
From March 18: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
March 14: To be announced.
March 15-16: "I Love You Again" (1940; W. S. Van Dyke), with Myrna Loy and William Powell; and "Rendezvous" (1935; William K. Howard), with Rosalind Russell and William Powell.
March 17-19: "Wife Versus Secretary" (1936; Clarence Brown), with Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, Myrna Loy, and James Stewart; and "Shadow of the Thin Man" (1941; W. S. Van Dyke), with Myrna Loy, William Powell, and Sam Levene.
March 20-21: "The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946; William Wyler), with Myrna Loy, Fredric March, Teresa Wright, Dana Andrews, Virginia Mayo, and Harold Russell.
March 22-23: "Fashions of 1934" (†); and "One Way Passage" (1932; Tay Garnett), with William Powell and Kay Francis.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 15: "Swimming to Cambodia" (1987; Jonathan Demme), with Spalding Gray; and "Home of the Brave" (1986; Laurie Anderson), with Anderson.
March 16-17: "Man Facing Southeast" (1987; Eliseo Subiela; an Argentine film, in Spanish); and "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (1985; Hector Babenco), with William Hurt and Raul Julia.
March 18-19: "Pink Flamingos" (1974; John Waters), with Divine; and "Polyester" (1981; John Waters), with Divine and Tab Hunter.
March 20: "My Fair Lady" (†).
March 21-22: "Something for Everyone" (1970; Harold Prince), with Angela Lansbury and Michael York; and "The Boys in the Band" (1970; William Friedkin).
From March 23: "Good Morning, Babylon" (1987; Paolo and Vittorio Taviani), with Vincent Spano and Joaquim de Almeida; and "Bellissima" (1951; Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Anna Magnani and Walter Chiari.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
March 14: "Out of the Blue" (1980; Dennis Hopper), with Linda Manz, Hopper, Sharon Farrell, and Raymond Burr; "Blue Velvet" (1986; David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Isabella Rossellini, Dennis Hopper, and Laura Dern; and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius" (1987; Paul Joyce), a documentary.
March 15: "Tracks" (1976; Henry Jaglom), with Dennis Hopper, Taryn Power, Dean Stockwell, and Topo Swope; "River's Edge" (1987; Tim Hunter), with Daniel Roebuck, Crispin Glover, Dennis Hopper, and Joshua Miller; and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius."
March 16-17: "Night Tide" (1964; Curtis Harrington), with Dennis Hopper; and "Queen of Blood" (1966; Curtis Harrington), with Basil Rathbone and Dennis Hopper.
From March 18: "O. C. and Stiggs" (1984; Robert Altman), with Daniel H. Jenkins, Neill Barry, and Dennis Hopper.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
March 14: To be announced.
March 15: "Rififi" (1955; Jules Dassin; in French), with Jean Servais; and "Only the Cool" (1972; Jean Delannoy).
March 16: "Cat People" (1942; Jacques Tourneur), with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Tom Conway; and "The Curse of the Cat People" (1944; Gunther Von Fritsch and Robert Wise), with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Ann Carter.
March 17: "Term of Trial" (1963; Peter Glenville), with Laurence Olivier, Simone Signoret, and Sarah Miles; and "As You Like It" (1936; Paul Czinner), with Elisabeth Bergner and Laurence Olivier.
March 18-19: "Devil in the Flesh" (1987; Marco Bellocchio; in Italian), with Maruschka Detmers and Federico Pitzalis; and "China Is Near" (1968; Marco Bellocchio; in Italian).
March 20: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972; Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man" (1981; Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi and Anouk Aimée.
March 21: "Trouble in Paradise" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch), with Kay Francis, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, and Edward Everett Horton; and "Ninotchka" (1939; Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo and Melvyn Douglas.
March 22: "The Big Clock" (1948; John Far-

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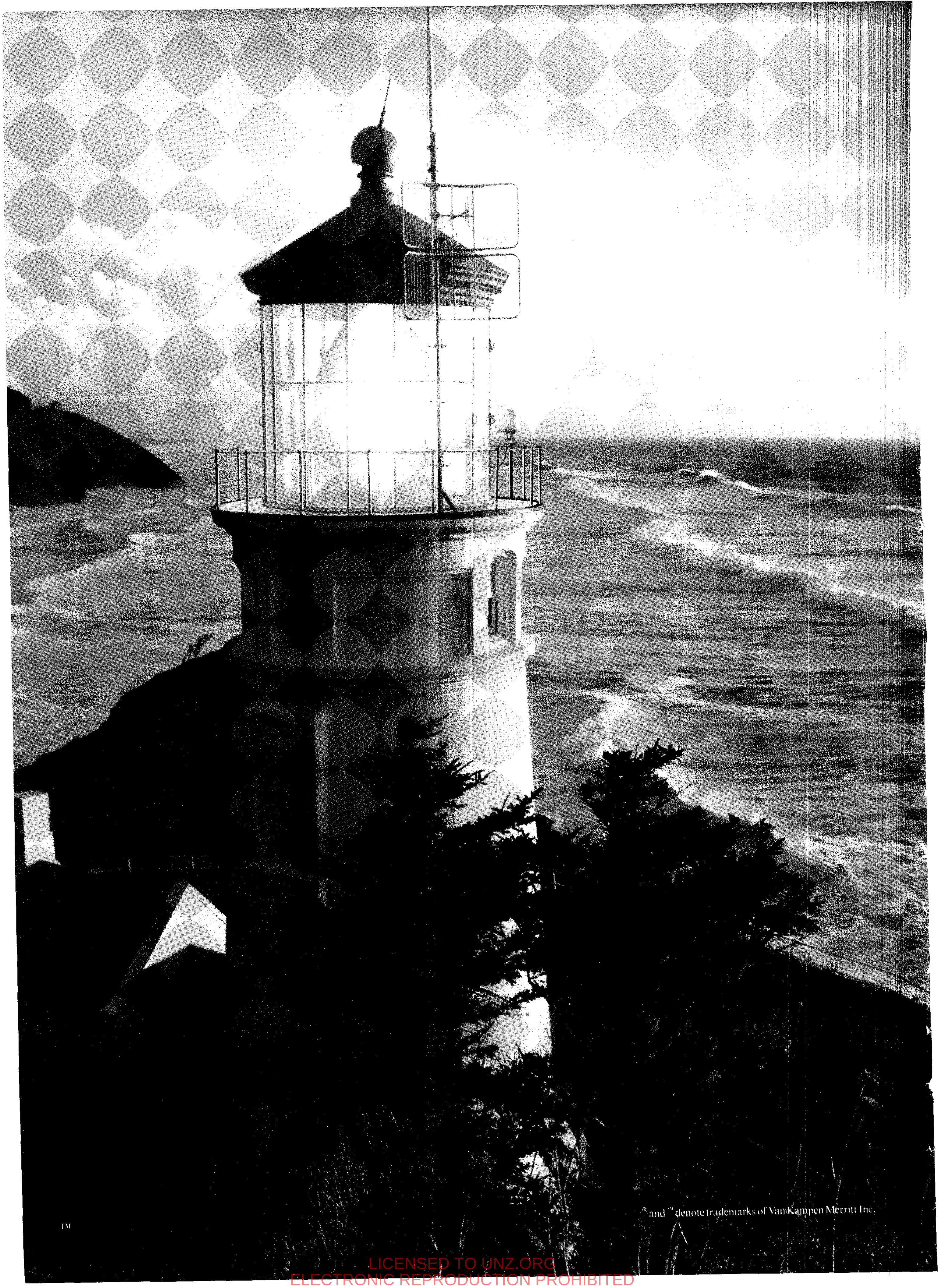

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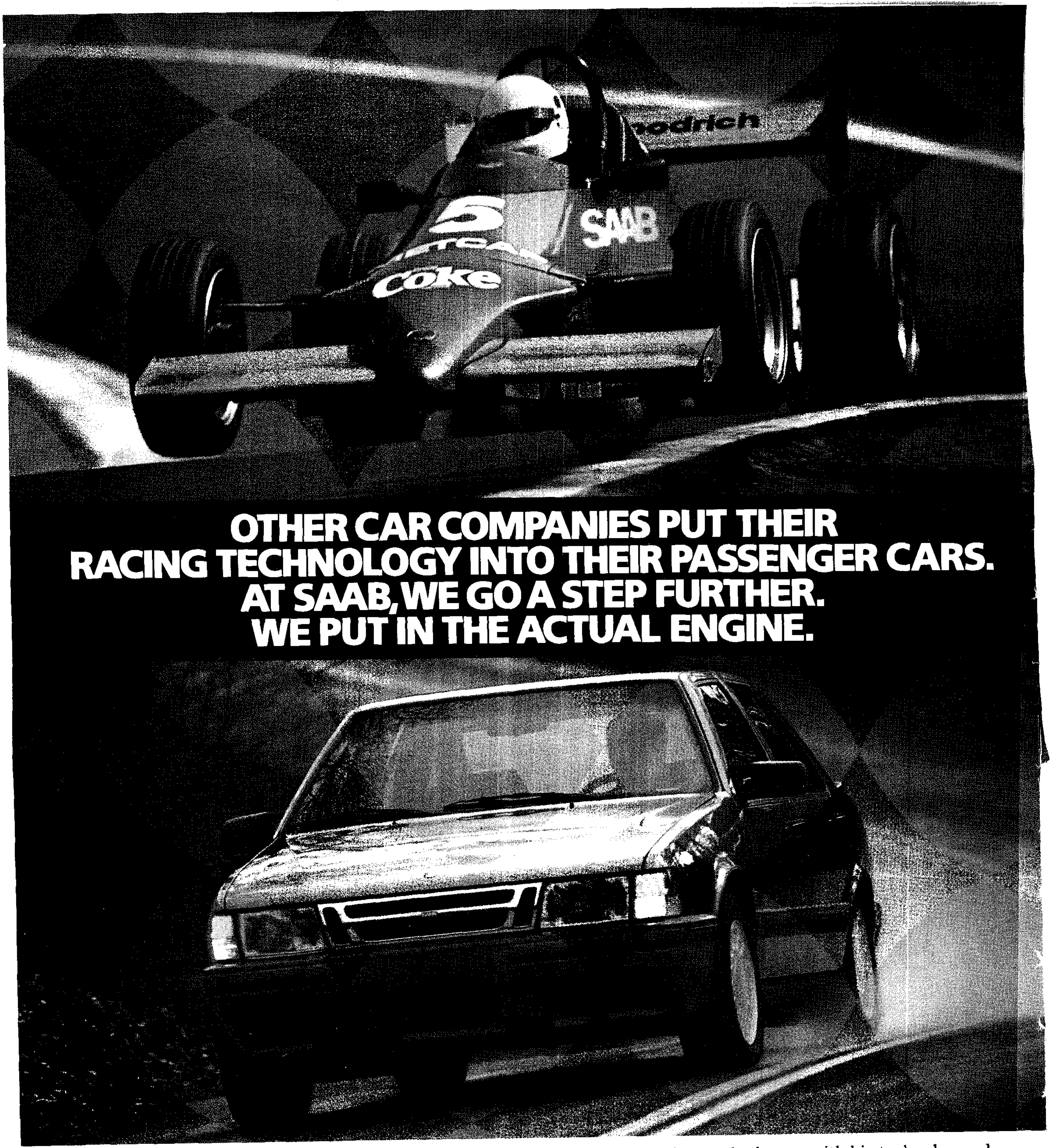
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row), with Ray Milland, Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Sullivan, Elsa Lanchester, and George Macready; and "No Way Out" (1987; Roger Donaldson), with Kevin Costner, Gene Hackman, Sean Young, and Will Patton.

March 23: "I Walked with a Zombie" (1943; Jacques Tourneur), with Frances Dee and James Ellison; and "Isle of the Dead" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 14: To be announced.

March 15: "Mr. Moto's Last Warning" (1939; Norman Foster), with Peter Lorre, Ricardo Cortez, Virginia Field, and John Carradine; and "Mr. Wong, Detective" (1938; William Nigh), with Boris Karloff and Grant Withers.

March 16: "True Confession" (1937; Wesley Ruggles), with Carole Lombard, John Barrymore, and Fred MacMurray; and "We're Not Dressing" (1934; Norman Taurog), with Bing Crosby, Ethel Merman, and Burns and Allen.

March 17: "Sylvia Scarlett" (†) and "Morning Glory" (†).

March 18-19: "Five Easy Pieces" (1970; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and "Easy Rider" (1969; Dennis Hopper), with Peter Fonda, Hopper, and Jack Nicholson.

March 20: "La Traviata" (1983; Franco Zeffirelli; in Italian), with Teresa Stratas and Plácido Domingo; and "Otello" (1986; Franco Zeffirelli; in Italian), with Plácido Domingo.

March 21: "Alexander Nevsky" (1938; Sergei Eisenstein; in Russian), with Nikolai Cherkassov; and "Ballad of a Soldier" (1959; Grigori Chakhrai; in Russian).

March 22: "Holiday" (1930; Edward H. Griffith), with Ann Harding, Mary Astor, Robert Ames, and Edward Everett Horton; and "No More Orchids" (1932; Walter Lang), with Carole Lombard, Walter Connolly, Louise Closser Hale, and Lyle Talbot.

March 23: "A Slight Case of Murder" (†) and "Arsenic and Old Lace" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: See listings under "Film Society of Lincoln Center."

Theatre 2: See listings under "Film Society of Lincoln Center."

Film Society of Lincoln Center (at MOMA)—A seventeen-day festival of new films by new directors. March 14 at 6: "Keeping Love Alive" (Great Britain; Stephen Garrett and David Robinson). . . . ¶ March 14 at 8:30: "The Case of Herman the Stoker" (Poland; Karol Irzykowski) and "Sunday Pranks" (Poland; Robert Glinski). . . . ¶ March 15 at 6: "The Big Parade" (People's Republic of China; Chen Kaige). . . . ¶ March 15 at 8:30 and March 16 at 6: "The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On" (Japan; Kazuo Hara). . . . ¶ March 16 at 8:30: "The Big Parade." . . . ¶ March 17 at 6: "The Photograph" (Greece; Nicos Papatakis). . . . ¶ March 17 at 8:30: "Bell Diamond" (United States; Jon Jost). . . . ¶ March 18 at 6: "Field of Honor" (France; Jean-Pierre Denis). . . . ¶ March 18 at 8:30: "Love Is a Dog from Hell" (Belgium; Dominique Deruddere). . . . ¶ March 19 at 1: "Bell Diamond." . . . ¶ March 19 at 3:30: "The Photograph." . . . ¶ March 19 at 6: "A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China" (United States; Philip Haas) and "John Huston & the Dubliners" (United States; Lilyan Sievernich). . . . ¶ March 19 at 8:30 and March 20 at 1: "Shame" (Australia; Steve Jodrell) . . . . ¶ March 20 at 3:30: "Field of Honor." . . . ¶ March 20 at 6: "Love Is a Dog from Hell." . . . ¶ March 20 at 8:30: "A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China" and "John Huston & the Dubliners." . . . ¶ March 21 at 6: "Feathers" (Australia; John Ruane) and "Cane Toads: An Unnatural History" (Australia; Mark Lewis). . . . ¶ March 21 at 8:30 and March 22 at 6: "Le Jupon Rouge" (France; Geneviève Lefebvre). . . . ¶ March 22 at 8:30: "Feathers" and "Cane Toads: An Unnatural History." . . . ¶ March 23 at 6: "A Chinese Ghost Story" (Hong Kong; Ching Sui-Tung). . . . ¶ March 23 at 8:30: "Family Viewing" (Canada; Atom Egoyan). (Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9500.)

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"WNET Thirteen: 25 Years on the Air," over a hundred hours of news, public affairs, documentary, music, dance, theatre, nature, science, and children's programming. The first section, featuring news, public affairs, and documentaries, is on view through March 19; the second section, featuring music, dance, and theatre, will be on view starting March 22. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—March 14 at 8: "The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum" (1939; Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 15 at 8: "Million Dollar Legs" (1932; Eddie Cline), with W. C. Fields, Jack Oakie, and Ben Turpin; "The Discovery of the Phonograph" (1986; Stuart Sherman); and "Bleu Shut" (Robert Nelson). . . . ¶ March 16 at 8: "El Bruto" (1952; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 17 at 8: A program of gay and lesbian films from France. . . . ¶ March 18 at 8: A program of films by Edward Jones. . . . ¶ March 19 at 8: A program of recent animated films. . . . ¶ March 20 at 8: "La Jetée" (1963; Chris Marker); and "Nostalgia" (1971). . . . ¶ March 21 at 8: "Himatsuri" (1984; Mitsuo Yanagimachi; in Japanese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 22 at 8: "Hellz-a-Poppin" (1941; H. C. Potter), with Olsen and Johnson. . . . ¶ March 23 at 8: "Wuthering Heights" (1953; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish, with English subtitles).

Plays Into Film: The Playwright's Perspective—A series of films and lectures. March 17 at 8: "The Trip to Bountiful" (1985; Peter Masterson), with Geraldine Page, John Heard, and Carlin Glynn. Horton Foote, the playwright, will be present. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100).

Zorina and Balanchine: The Movie Years—The first two in a series of four films choreographed by George Balanchine, starring Vera Zorina. March 15 at 8: "The Goldwyn Follies" (1938; George Marshall). . . . ¶ March 22 at 8: "On Your Toes" (1939; Ray Enright). (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 570-3949.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Anna—Sally Kirkland plays a Czech actress named Anna Radkova—once her country's leading film star, during the brief period of cultural freedom that ended in 1968, and now, in her forties, just another struggling actress in New York, desperate enough to take a job understudying all seven roles in an Off Broadway show. The conceit of the movie is that Anna has a kind of understudy in her own life, a lovely Czech country girl (played by the model Paulina Porizkova), who moves in with her and effortlessly achieves all the American-style success that has eluded the older woman. The script (by Agnieszka Holland, from a story by Holland and the director, Yurek Bogayevicz) occasionally suggests some sort of meditation on history and identity, though for the most part the film is content to be a vehicle for Kirkland, who laughs, cries, etc., in an accent that Meryl Streep would be proud of.—T.R. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; through March 17.)

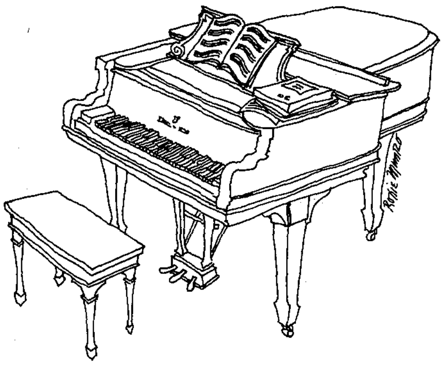
Arsenic and Old Lace (1944)—The sane theatre-critic hero, Cary Grant, tries to convince his sweetly lethal little aunts (Josephine Hull and Jean Adair) that it isn't nice to put arsenic in the elderberry wine that they serve their guests, but they just don't understand why he gets so upset. You may not, either; the director, Frank Capra, has Grant performing in such a frenzied, dithering manner that during much of the action he seems crazier than anybody else. The villains—murderers who are less couth in their methods than the innocently mad aunts—are Peter Lorre, as himself, and Raymond Massey, impersonating Boris Karloff. With James Gleason, Edward Everett Horton, and Jack Carson. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 23.)

Au Revoir les Enfants (Goodbye, Children)—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boy's attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Cinema I.)

Broadcast News—The writer-producer-director James L. Brooks puts us inside the world of a network's Washington bureau and sets up an adversarial relationship between the reddish-blond charmer Tom (William Hurt), who represents TV's corruption of the news into entertainment, and dark, broody Aaron (Albert Brooks), a near-genius newsman who, on the surface, at least, represents substance and integrity. The heroine, Jane (Holly Hunter), is a producer, and she and Aaron are supposed to be high-principled professionals, as well as close friends. The satirical, romantic-comedy dilemma is that Jane finds herself falling in love with Tom, who incarnates everything that she despises. Basically all the picture is saying is that beautiful, assured people have an edge over the rest of us, no matter how high our I.Q.s are. And it lacks any filmmaking excitement. With all the surface authenticity Jim Brooks gives us, he himself represents the corruption of movies into TV. (1/11/88) (Embassy 72nd St. . . . ¶ Gramercy, and Coronet; through March 17.)

The Dead—Working in a mood of tranquil exuberance, the eighty-year-old John Huston made a great warm, funny movie out of the great story that James Joyce wrote at twenty-five. Huston never before blended his actors so intuitively, so musically. The party that the Morkan sisters and their fortyish niece give in their Dublin town house on January 6, 1904, the Feast of the Epiphany, suggests the Chekhov production of your dreams, or maybe one of Satyajit Ray's triumphs. The cast is glorious: Donal McCann is Gabriel; Anjelica Huston is Gabriel's wife, Gretta; Donal Donnelly is Freddy; Marie Kean is Freddy's mother; Cathleen Delany is Aunt Julia; Helena Carroll is Aunt Kate; Ingrid Craigie is Mary Jane; Dan O'Herlihy is the Protestant Mr. Browne; and Frank Patterson is the tenor who sings "The Lass of Aughrim." Screenplay by Tony Huston; cinematography by Fred Murphy; score by Alex North. (12/14/87) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Festival, and Metro Cinema; through March 17.)

Empire of the Sun—At the outset, this Steven Spielberg epic is so big and majestic you want to laugh in pleasure, and it stays that way for about forty-five minutes—Spielberg takes over Shanghai, and makes it his city. But then, first in brief patches and then in longer ones, his directing goes terribly wrong. The story, taken from J. G. Ballard's autobiographical novel, is set at the outbreak of the Second World War, and it's about Jim (Christian Bale), an eleven-year-old British schoolboy, who is separated from his parents when the Japanese Army invades the city, on



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December 8, 1941, and how he changes in order to survive three years of starving in a prison camp. It isn't told straightforwardly, though. Spielberg throws himself into bravura passages, lingers over them trying to give them a poetic obsessiveness, and loses his grasp of the narrative. For the sake of emotion—to have something to say, to give the picture some meaning—he pumps it full of false emotion. (That's what his poetry is.) John Williams' editorializing music swells and swooshes, trying to make you feel that something religious is going on. Christian Bale is a fine performer, directed superlatively; also with John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson, Nigel Havers, and Joe Pantoliano. The adaptation is credited to Tom Stoppard (it was also worked on by Menno Meyjes); the cinematography is by Allen Daviau. Spielberg had permission to shoot in Shanghai for only three weeks; the settings were matched up and constructed in Spain and London. 2 hours and 33 minutes. (12/28/87) (Plaza; through March 17.)

The Family—Ettore Scola's chronicle of a Roman middle-class family from 1906 to 1986 uses formal gimmicks to disguise its lack of substance. The film's nine episodes take place at precise ten-year intervals; both the first episode and the last involve the taking of a group photograph; and all the action is set in the family's spacious apartment. Scola and his co-scenarists (Ruggero Maccari and Furio Scarpelli) work the dull middle ground of human experience—amazingly little happens to any of this family's dozens of members—but the story's uneventfulness doesn't really mean anything, either. The filmmakers seem to be aiming for the blandest kind of universality. If we didn't know better, we'd swear that this fussy, empty movie had been made to demonstrate the decadence of bourgeois filmmaking, European style. With Vittorio Gassman, Fanny Ardant, Stefania Sandrelli, Andrea Occhipinti, Jo Ciampa, and, in a cameo, Philippe Noiret. In Italian.—T.R. (Quad Cinema; through March 17.)

Fashions of 1934—Bette Davis at her blondest as a fashion artist professionally and romantically involved with suave, shady promoter William Powell. Elaborate piffle, directed by William Dieterle. With Hugh Herbert, Henry O'Neill, and Frank McHugh. (Biograph Cinema; March 22-23.)

Fatal Attraction—A primer on the bad things that can happen if a man cheats on his wife. There's sometimes a fine line between sexiness and craziness, and the hero (Michael Douglas), a Manhattan corporate lawyer—a settled married man—isn't hip enough to catch the danger signals when he lets a woman book editor (Glenn Close) talk him into going with her to her loft. Once this woman begins behaving as if she had a right to a share in the lawyer's life, she becomes the dreaded lunatic of horror movies. But with a difference: she parrots the aggressively angry, self-righteous statements that have become commonplaces of feminist fiction, and they're so inappropriate to the circumstances that they're the proof she's loco. They're also the director Adrian Lyne's and the screenwriter James Dearden's hostile version of feminism. Basically, this is a gross-out slasher movie in a glossy format, and it enforces conventional morality (in the era of AIDS) by piling fear on paranoiac fear. With Anne Archer as the beautiful homebody wife, Ellen Hamilton Latzen as the bright little daughter, and Stuart Pankin as the clowning pal. Tip-top editing by Michael Kahn and Peter E. Berger. (10/19/87) (Waverly, and Embassy; through March 17.)

Frantic—With Harrison Ford, directed by Roman Polanski. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 34th St. East, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Beekman, and National Twin; through March 17.)

Good Morning, Vietnam—It sounded like a first-rate idea: Robin Williams doing his manic free-association comedy as a disk jockey, Adrian Cronauer, on Armed Forces Radio in Saigon in 1965. But the picture makes the character out to be a vulnerable, compassionate, respectful-of-the-Vietnamese wonderful guy, and the director, Barry Levinson, has a numbing sense of rhythm. Williams' riffs are chopped short, and the film keeps cutting to soldiers breaking up over his spiel before it's out of his mouth. There is an Adrian Cronauer, and the movie is very loosely based on his exploits, but the way the story line (from the script by Mitch Markowitz) has been directed it's a clumsier version of the plots of fifties musicals. (1/11/88) (Cinema II, and Art Greenwich Twin. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through March 17. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting March 18.)

Hairspray—The writer-director John Waters treats the message movie as a genre to be parodied, just like the teenpic. Combining the two, he comes up with a pop dadaist musical comedy, set in Baltimore in 1962. Waters loves narrative, and he has half a dozen plots crisscrossing each other. In the middle are the spherical Mrs. Edna Turnblad (played by the male actor Divine) and her baby-blimp daughter, Tracy (Ricki Lake); they wear matching mother-and-daughter outfits. Tracy, who's the newest teen-age dancer on "The Corny Collins Show," discovers that black kids aren't allowed to take part and she becomes a leader in the fight for integration. Meanwhile, Divine watches over Tracy and preens like a mother hen. There's a what-the-hell quality to Divine's acting which the film needs; it would be too close to a real teenpic without it. When Divine's Edna Turnblad is onscreen in the sleeveless dresses she's partial to, the movie has something like the lunacy of a W. C. Fields in drag. With Colleen Fitzpatrick as Tracy's bitchy rival Amber, Leslie Ann Powers as shy Penny, and Michael St. Gerard, Clayton Prince, Ruth Brown, Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Jerry Stiller, Shawn Thompson, Ric Ocasek, Pia Zadora, Jo Ann Havrilla, and Waters himself as a sicko psychiatrist. (3/7/88) (Loews New York Twin, Waverly, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

High Tide—This is a woman's picture in the way that "Stella Dallas" was—it's about the mother-daughter bond. But it's also a woman's picture in a new way: the Australian director Gillian Armstrong has the technique and the assurance to put a woman's fluid, not fully articulated emotions right onto the screen. And she has an actress—Judy Davis—who's a genius at moods. As one of three backup singers for a touring Elvis imitator, Judy Davis is contemptuous of the cruddy act, contemptuous of herself. Feeling put down, the dumb-lug Elvis fires her, and she's left alone at the beginning of winter in a ramshackle beach town on the magnificent, windswept coast of New South Wales. There she encounters her lonely teen-age daughter (Claudia Karvan), whom she'd given up to her confident, belligerent mother-in-law (Jan Adele) thirteen years earlier. A great many young women are likely to feel that this is the movie they've wanted to make. The script is by Laura Jones; the superb cinematography is by Russell Boyd, who was also the camera operator; the stunningly effective editing is by Nick Beauman. With Colin Friels, Bob Purtell, John Clayton, and Mark Hembrow. (2/22/88) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Hope and Glory—A great comedy about the blitz. In this autobiographical film, the writer-director John Boorman has had the inspiration to desentimentalize wartime England and show us the Second World War the way he saw it as an eight-year-old—as a party that kept going day after day, night after night. Boorman lets his characters say the previously unsayable. Bored with crouching indoors during the nightly raids by the Luftwaffe, the dimply blond fifteen-year-old Dawn (Sammi Davis), the eldest of the three Rohan children, runs outside, watches the firefighters at work on a blazing house, and dances in the Rohans' postage-stamp-size front garden. "It's lovely!" she calls out. The large cast includes Sebastian Rice Edwards as the eight-year-old Bill, Geraldine Muir as his little sister, Sarah Miles as his mother, David Hayman as his father, Ian Bannen as his grandfather, and Susan Wooldridge, Derrick O'Connor, and Jean-Marc Barr as the Canadian jokester. (10/5/87) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Gemini; through March 17. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema; starting March 18.)

Isle of the Dead (1945)—Val Lewton produced, but except for a few touches it's a mess—something about demons on a plague-ridden Greek island, involving premature burial and evil possession of the resurrected body. Boris Karloff and Katherine Emery are the leads; she comes out of her crypt and starts stabbing people with a trident. With Ellen Drew, Alan Napier, and Jason Robards, Sr., in a surprisingly poor performance. Mark Robson directed. (Thalia SoHo; March 23.)

Jean de Florette—The setting is Provence in the early nineteen-twenties. As the hunchback Jean de Florette, an educated, nature-loving city fellow who has learned about farming from books, Gérard Depardieu wears "GOOD MAN" in capital letters across his wide brow; in smaller letters we can read "He has poetry in his soul." Jean has a devoted wife (Elisabeth Depardieu), who used to sing in opera, and a delicate little daughter named Manon. And for slightly over two hours we watch him trudge across the land he has inherited hauling two barrels of water that are fastened across his hump. When there's no rain, his plants shrivel and his rabbits die, and it's agonizing for us, because we know that there's a spring of fresh mountain water on the land. His neighbors—the prosperous, greedy old peasant César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and César's dull-witted nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil)—have hidden the spring under a load of cement, so that Jean will be forced to sell out to them. Adapted from the first volume of Marcel Pagnol's two-part novel "The Water of the Hills," published in 1963 (it was derived from a picture he made in 1952). The story of Jean de Florette is completed in the film "Manon of the Spring" (see below). The director, Claude Berri, who did the adaptation with Gérard Brach, aimed for fidelity to the novel; he has said that it was his task to give the material "a cinematic rhythm," but "there was no need for imagination." That's what *he* thinks. In French. (7/13/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema, and Cinema 3; through March 17.)

The Last Emperor—Bernardo Bertolucci tells the story of Pu Yi, who was not quite three when, in 1908, he was set on the Dragon Throne in Peking's Forbidden City and became the titular ruler of a third of the people on earth. After being deposed and then enthroned again in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, he was in Soviet custody for five years, and then spent ten years being "reëducated" in a Chinese war-criminals prison. The movie doesn't have the juicy absurdity that seems to pour right out of the historical story. And it suppresses the drama. But it has pictorial grace and a dull fascination. Bertolucci presents Pu Yi (John Lone) as a man without will or backbone who lives his life as spectacle—who watches his life go by. And so we're given a historical pageant without a protagonist. There's an idea here, but it's a dippy idea—it results in a passive movie. With Joan Chen and Peter O'Toole. Cinematography by Vittorio Storaro; the film shows the palaces and courtyards of the two-hundred-and-fifty-acre Forbidden City. 2 hours and 46 minutes. (11/30/87) (8th St.

Playhouse, and 57th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through March 17.)

Manon of the Spring—Will Fate settle the hash of César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and his cretinous nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil), the Provençal farmers whose treachery caused the death of gentle, hunchbacked Jean de Florette? Of course it will. To keep us awake while we're waiting for the inevitable, this concluding half of Claude Berri's adaptation of the Marcel Pagnol novel "The Water of the Hills" serves up pretty much the same menu as "Jean de Florette" (see above): changing seasons (exquisitely shot by Bruno Nuytten), Montand looking sly, Auteuil gaping, wiry peasants and fat shopkeepers shouting at each other over bottles of vin ordinaire. With Emmanuelle Béart. Screenplay by Berri and Gérard Brach, with a credit for original dialogue by Pagnol. In French. —T.R. (Bleecker St. Cinema. . . . ¶ Cinema 3; through March 17.)

Masquerade—With Rob Lowe and Meg Tilly, directed by Bob Swaim. (Reviewed in this issue.) (U. A. East, 23rd St. West Triplex, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

A Month in the Country—Pat O'Connor's film, based on a novel by J. L. Carr, is intelligent and scrupulously made, but it never comes to life. Set in Yorkshire just after the First World War, it's about several kinds of restoration: A young veteran named Birkin (Colin Firth), emotionally blasted by the war, accepts a commission from a small country church to uncover a long-neglected mural by an unknown medieval artist. In the process of restoring this odd, apocalyptic tableau—a disturbing vision that the young man finds himself identifying with—Birkin somehow returns to a semblance of his prewar self. The themes are impeccably worked out in the script (by the playwright Simon Gray), though in ways that seem at odds with the story's emotional core. "A Month in the Country" is an attempt to restore something, too—the serene confidence of well-made nineteenth-century fiction—but the project has no conviction. The cast includes Kenneth Branagh, Patrick Malahide, and the wonderful Natasha Richardson.—T.R. (68th St. Playhouse; through March 16.)

Moonstruck—A rose-tinted black comedy, with its own special lushness. Cher is devastatingly funny and sinuous and beautiful as a widowed bookkeeper who lives with her Italian-American family in a big old brownstone in Brooklyn. When the bookkeeper and her fiancé's brother, a baker (Nicolas Cage), start lusting for one another, a fairy-tale full moon lights up the movie. And when you see that the whole cast of family members are involved in libidinal confusions the opera-buffa structure can make you feel close to deliriously happy. Cage is a wonderful romantic clown: he can look stupefied while he smolders. And the director, Norman Jewison, working from John Patrick Shanley's script, stylizes the ethnic performances given by the husky-voiced Olympia Dukakis, the great, leering Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette. The picture is slender, but it's an original: its mockery is a giddy homage to our desire for grand passion. (1/25/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and 86th Street East Twin. . . . ¶ Sutton, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Warner; through March 17.)

Morning Glory (1933)—Katharine Hepburn got her first Academy Award for her performance as Eva Lovelace—the name taken by a girl who comes to New York obsessively determined to become a great actress. It's a strange, ambivalent study of this lying-cheating kind of determination, taken from a play by Zoë Akins and directed by Lowell Sherman. With Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Adolphe Menjou. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 17.)

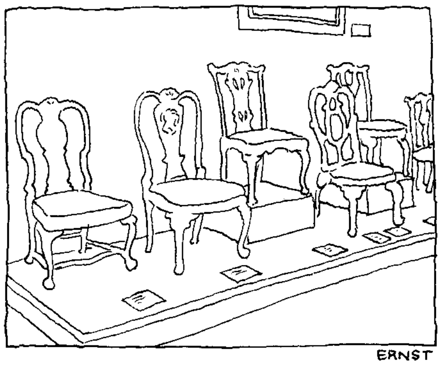
My Fair Lady (1964)—The Lerner and Loewe musical staggers along in this large production, directed by George Cukor and designed by Cecil Beaton. The film seems to go on for about forty-five minutes after the story is finished. Audrey Hepburn is an affecting Eliza, though she is totally unconvincing as a guttersnipe; Rex Harrison had already played Higgins more than a bit too often. With Stanley Holloway, as buoyant as ever, Wilfrid Hyde-White, and Gladys Cooper. (Cinema Village; March 20.)

My Life as a Dog—Lasse Hallström's film is a gentle, episodic narrative of a twelve-year-old boy (Anton Glanzelius) growing up in nineteen-fifties Sweden. Ingemar, a lively but sensitive kid, gets passed around from household to household when his mother becomes seriously ill. At its best, the movie is very shrewd about the ways children protect themselves from disorienting, and even traumatic, experiences. Hallström's naïveté as a director gives many of the dramatic scenes a touching straightforwardness. But that same quality sabotages the comic passages with a tone of heavy, self-satisfied whimsy. With Tomas von Brömssen, Anki Liden, Ingmari Carlsson, and Melinda Kinnaman. Screenplay by Hallström, Reidar Jönsson, Brasse Brännstrom, and Per Berglund, from Jönsson's novel. In Swedish.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Sammy and Rosie Get Laid—This second film by the director Stephen Frears and the writer Hanif Kureishi, who made "My Beautiful Laundrette," has so much going on that it keeps losing track of what it's about. Sammy (Ayub Khan Din) and Rosie (Frances Barber) and their friends are Third World bohemians who live in a decaying, racially mixed part of London. Sammy's father, Rafi (Shashi Kapoor), who was a minister in the repressive government of Pakistan and is fleeing threats on his life, thinks he can return to the courteous, law-abiding England he remembers from thirty years before. He comes from the airport straight into a race riot—the movie is his nightmare experience of the new London. What we see is an apocalyptic carnival that's like street theatre. At times, it's as if Swinging London had come back as a race riot. Made in a documentary manner as stylized as a Hollywood musical, the movie is hyperconscious of art, of politics, of itself, and at times it's exasperatingly affectless. At its best, it's playfully Godardian, as in the sequence with the screen split horizontally and three multiracial couples stretched out on top of each other, and the Ghetto Lites singing a reggae version of "My Girl." There are two marvellous performances: by Kapoor and by Claire Bloom, as a woman he deserted long ago. (11/16/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Shoot to Kill—Sidney Poitier, appearing onscreen for the first time in eleven years, plays an F.B.I. agent tracking a deranged killer through the Pacific Northwest wilderness. With urban action sequences at the beginning and the end of the picture, "Shoot to Kill" is a cop movie wrapped around a Western—to no particular effect. The screenwriters (Harv Zimmel, Michael Burton, and Daniel Petrie, Jr.) have constructed this story as if they were desperadoes on the run: they'll get from point A to point B any way they can. Roger Spottiswoode, the director, is a hostage to their slapdash, random-killer methods. The action set pieces are superbly staged, but less powerful than they'd be if there were any coherent narrative context for them. Spottiswoode outclasses the material, and so does Poitier: though he doesn't really have a character to play, his quiet authority keeps the movie from seeming as cold and cheesily manipulative as it might have. Also with Tom Berenger, Kirstie Alley, Clancy Brown, and Richard Masur. The excellent cinematography is by Michael Chapman. —T.R. (D. W. Griffith, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy 1. . . . ¶ Regency; through March 17.)

A Slight Case of Murder (1938)—It's a burlesque of gangster films, with Edward G. Robinson as a bootlegger who turns legitimate and faces one mortifying mess after another. He drives his family out for a weekend in a country house and finds the corpses of four gangsters sitting around a table in the spare bedroom. Eventually, at a party back in town, the four are brought in and strung up on hooks in a closet. The director, Lloyd Bacon, succeeds in getting giggles out of some of these scenes, but his style is too broad, and the tone of the film is archly childish. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 23.)

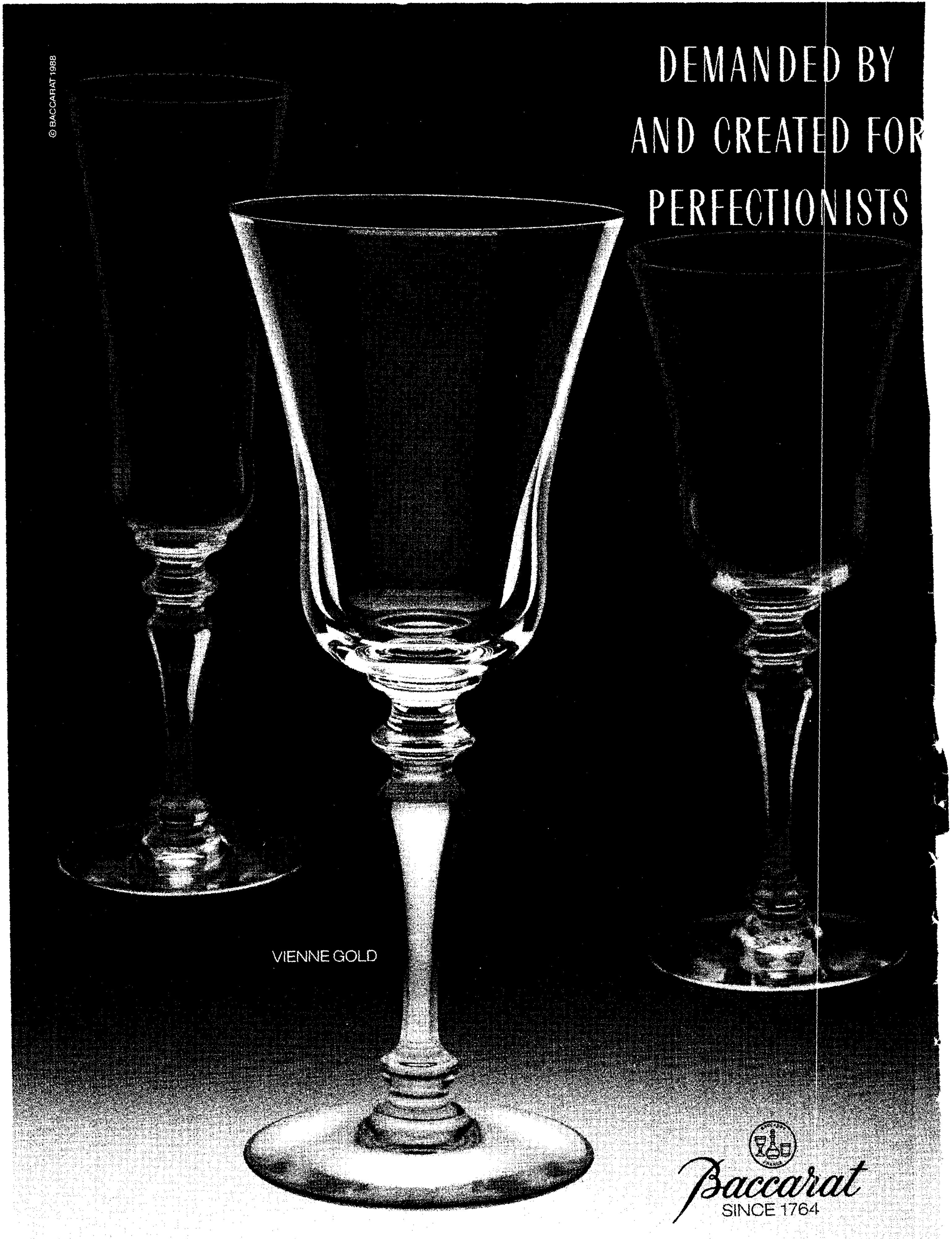


Switching Channels—With Kathleen Turner, Burt Reynolds, and Christopher Reeve; directed by Ted Kotcheff. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Gemini. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Criterion Center; through March 17.)

Sylvia Scarlett (1936)—This Katharine Hepburn film, directed by George Cukor, was not a success—and, fascinating as it is, you'll know why. Taken from a Compton MacKenzie novel, and set in Cornwall but actually shot on the California coast, it features an oddly erotic transvestite performance—Hepburn is dressed as a boy throughout most of the film—and a peculiarly upsetting love affair between Edmund Gwenn, as her con-man father, and an uncouth young tease (Dennie Moore). The movie seems to go wrong in a million directions, but it has unusually affecting qualities. Cary Grant plays a brashly likable product of the British slums—this was the picture in which his boisterous energy first broke through. He and a fearfully smirky Brian Aherne are the male leads, and the beautiful Natalie Paley is the bitch-villainess. The extraordinarily free cinematography is by Joseph August; no other Cukor film of the thirties ever looked like this one. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 17.)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being—Directed by Philip Kaufman, this adaptation of Milan Kundera's novel is touching in sophisticated ways that you don't expect from an American director. A prankish sex comedy, it treats modern political events with a delicate—yet almost sly—sense of tragedy. It's the way the variations of jealousy and erotic attraction are played out by the three principal actors—an Englishman (Daniel Day-Lewis), a Swedish woman (Lena Olin), and a Frenchwoman (Juliette Binoche), all playing Czechs—that gives the movie its wonderfully unresolved texture. The story begins in Prague in 1968, during the period of freedom of expression and artistic flowering known as "socialism with a human face." Day-Lewis's Tomas is a hedonist, a womanizer, and an eminent young brain surgeon; Olin's Sabina, a painter who is his longtime sex partner, and Binoche's Tereza, whom he marries, represent the two poles of his life—lightness and weight. Kaufman has an exuberant temperament, and the spirit of the film is younger and looser than that of the book; a short two hours and fifty-three minutes, the picture has a whirling beauty. With Derek de Lint, Pavel Landovsky, Erland Josephson, and Donald Moffat. Script by Jean-Claude Carrière and Kaufman; editing by Walter Murch; cinematography by Sven Nykvist. (2/8/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Wall Street—Oliver Stone makes films in the overwrought pulp style of directors like Samuel Fuller and Robert Aldrich. Everything has the hysterically urgent tone of a war movie, and the actors scream their lines as if they were struggling to be heard above the din of artillery fire. Applying his combat-zone sensibility to the financial community, Stone produces some good, weird comedy in the movie's manic first hour, as the young stockbroker hero (Charlie Sheen) claws his way to success by providing inside information to a ruthless corporate raider (Michael Douglas). As the picture goes on, though, the disparity between Stone's complex subject and his melodramatic style becomes less and less entertaining. Repeating the worst idea in "Platoon," he turns the movie into a contest for the young hero's soul, a battle between his decent union-man father (Martin Sheen) and the greedy, reptilian Douglas. The dialogue gets overexplicit, the tone becomes desperately moralistic, and we begin to wonder if Charlie Sheen's soul is really worth all this fuss. (At one point, he steps out onto his balcony and muses aloud, "Who am I?," and the audience has to think a minute: Tom Cruise? Judd Nelson?) Also with Daryl Hannah (cruelly directed), Hal Holbrook, and Terence Stamp.—T.R. (Gotham Cinema.)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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

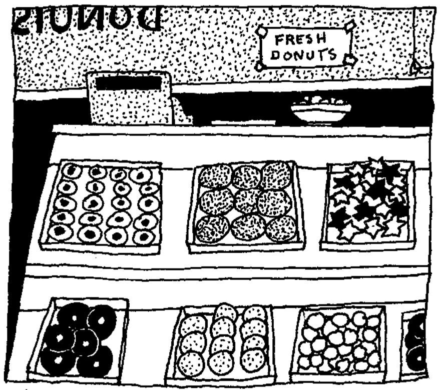
Notes and Comment

A RECENT warm spell in the Northeast, the TV weatherman announced, had caused a "winter meltdown." Last October's stock-market collapse, the financial commentators told us, was a "market meltdown." A novelist wrote that his central character's fraying nerves had brought about a "mental meltdown." The "m" word is used rather freely these days—except by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which continues to speak primly about the possible danger of a serious "abnormal event" at one of the large nuclear power plants now operating around the country.

After the Chernobyl disaster, in April, 1986, this country's nuclear experts offered the reassurance that major design differences at American nuclear plants—most notably the presence of a superstrong "containment" building surrounding each of our reactors—would prevent deadly radioactive materials from leaking out as a result of an accident. It was subsequently learned, though, that the Chernobyl plant did have a large steel-and-concrete containment box—the top of which was blown off by the explosion that followed the overheating and burning of the reactor's uranium-fuelled core. Moreover, it turned out that the containment building at Chernobyl was strikingly similar in design to the containment buildings of thirty-nine nuclear plants built in this country by the General Electric Company and of ten built by Westinghouse.

According to the N.R.C. staff, the most worrisome American containment design is the G.E. Mark I. A few weeks after Chernobyl, a senior N.R.C. official told a group of utility officials that an agency study showed "something like a ninety-per-cent probability of that containment failing" during a serious accident. Subsequent technical analysis has examined in detail what is likely to happen if tons of molten uranium fuel hit the thin steel shell that lines the walls of the Mark I containment structure. A panel of experts told the N.R.C. last fall, "The consensus of the group is that if you have a core-on-the-floor situation there is no doubt that the containment will fail, and fail rapidly."

Regulatory officials have known about some Mark I containment flaws since the early nineteen-seventies, but they have yet to make up their minds about what, if anything, to do in response to the accumulated data on the subject. An industry newsletter, *Inside N.R.C.*, reports that an "unusual gathering" of officials to discuss this subject was held last month—a session in which, since it was out of public earshot, the "m" word was undoubtedly used a lot. "Executive Director for Operations Victor Stello and top level staffers secluded themselves in a Baltimore, Md., hotel for three days . . . to try to resolve the Mark I question and other severe accident issues that have divided the staff," the report says, and it goes on to say that "an increasingly bitter bureaucratic battle" is taking place, and that "the agency has become highly politicized," with some N.R.C. technical experts insisting that the flaws in the Mark I containment be fixed, while "some senior staff members . . . are doing everything they can to make sure the game is played by industry's rules."



The industry is bent on keeping the plants running at full power, and while the N.R.C. staff debates how this can possibly be rationalized, the twenty-four plants that depend on Mark I containments are continuing to operate. The plants are in Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

If meltdowns were highly improbable events—and the N.R.C. once believed they posed a smaller statistical danger to the public than falling meteorites—there would be little risk that the fragile Mark I would ever be put to the test. But, according to recent N.R.C. calculations, the odds of a meltdown are startlingly high: there is roughly a forty-five-per-cent chance that a severe core-melt accident will occur in the United States within the next two decades. One might hope that with a risk of this magnitude some prudent action would be taken, such as suspending the operation of plants that are situated near major cities. Billions of dollars have been invested in these plants, it is true, but the cost of losing everything within a thousand square miles of one of them—the size of the area that had to be evacuated around Chernobyl—is astronomically greater. Can one imagine the cost of writing off the homes, office buildings, schools, hospitals, and factories in a thousand-square-mile area around, say, the Indian Point nuclear plant, thirty-five miles north of New York City? Yet the N.R.C. seems to view meltdowns not as a direct safety and economic threat that should be eliminated but as a P.R. problem that must be finessed. In a memo outlining suggestions for a "Long Range Plan" for the N.R.C. its chief safety advisers assign a low priority to upgrading plant safety. What they emphasize is that the agency should take "positive steps" to prepare the press and the public psychologically for potential nuclear-radiation traumas. "The quality of reporting of the next major nuclear accident will depend upon the quality of the relations between the NRC and the media, which will in turn depend upon the credibility that is established during the preaccident period," the N.R.C. memorandum states. "This can have a profound effect on the degree of panic engendered by the media, with inevitable consequences for the public health and safety." The N.R.C.'s advisers recommend loosening up, and using the "m" word from time to time might save the N.R.C. from a certain amount of bad press. Enforcing strict safety standards in order to prevent meltdown accidents might also help protect the agency's image, but this alternative strategy would be based on the "r" word—"regulation"—about which the Reagan Administration remains extremely squeamish.

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Fax

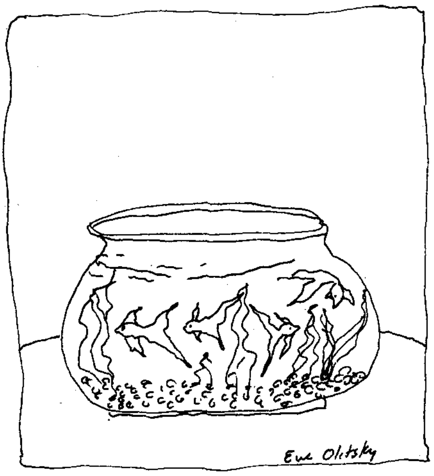
AT one time, whole offices had to make do with a single pencil. The pencil was kept in a central data-processing center, under the control of the office manager, and it was apparently a major hassle to apply to use it. Later on, departmental work groups received pencils of their own. Still later, individual work groups got pencils. Finally, around the dawn of modern times, pencils could be found on the desks of individual workers. The telephone went through a similar dispersal, starting about a hundred years ago. Computers ditto, starting, let's say, thirty years ago. Do we value these communication tools less as their availability increases? By what degrees do they lose their initial, almost sacramental aura? These are questions, perhaps, for interdisciplinary summer conferences. We are here merely to report that we have seen the next wave of office technology rolling toward everyday use, and it is fax.

For those who came in even later than we did, "fax" is short for "facsimile transmission." That means, as far as we can make out, the sending of a photocopy through telephone lines. Over at A.T. & T., they've been watching the fax wave build for years. In fact, it was A.T. & T.—which happens to sell a line of fax machines as well as the international telephone service essential to fax use, and a line of personal computers that happen to interface flawlessly with its fax machines—that invited a bunch of us from the cutting edge of the information industry over to the Radio City Suite of the Rainbow Room to kick off its next marketing campaign, the Fax Challenge.

Everybody we met there seemed to have a story about someone who'd had a fulfilling personal experience with fax. Ray Butkus, A.T. & T.'s deputy director for international marketing, told us about the managing director of A.T. & T.'s Far Eastern subsidiary. When he first got his job, his parents, who are elderly and live in Iowa, were reported to be quite unhappy. "So he gave them a fax machine, and now he communicates constantly," Mr. Butkus said. "If he and his wife dine out in Hong Kong, they'll send his parents a copy of the menu. These people have become the talk of their nursing home." Mr. Butkus himself, when his first child was born, faxed birth announcements to twelve countries. "But I should point out that in eleven of those countries the message was less than one minute, so it's not as extravagant as it sounds," he added.

Carole Katz, of A.T. & T.'s fax-marketing department, told us, "I use mine to send something to a guy one floor down from me. It's much better than waiting a day—or more—for interoffice mail."

Peggy O'Doherty, a fresh-faced young woman in international marketing, seemed shocked when we mentioned Ms. Katz's in-house faxing—she murmured something about how *she* would never try to get away with *that*—and yet it was clear that she understood the enthusiasm from which it sprang. "When we put out the R.F.P."—that's "request for proposal," an advertising-industry term—"for this campaign, and we were talking to the creatives, they told us fax fever had really hit," Ms. O'Doherty said. "*They* were sending things floor to floor, they were so excited."



"Fax fever," we said.

Ms. O'Doherty looked alarmed. "Well, that's just what *I* called it," she said.

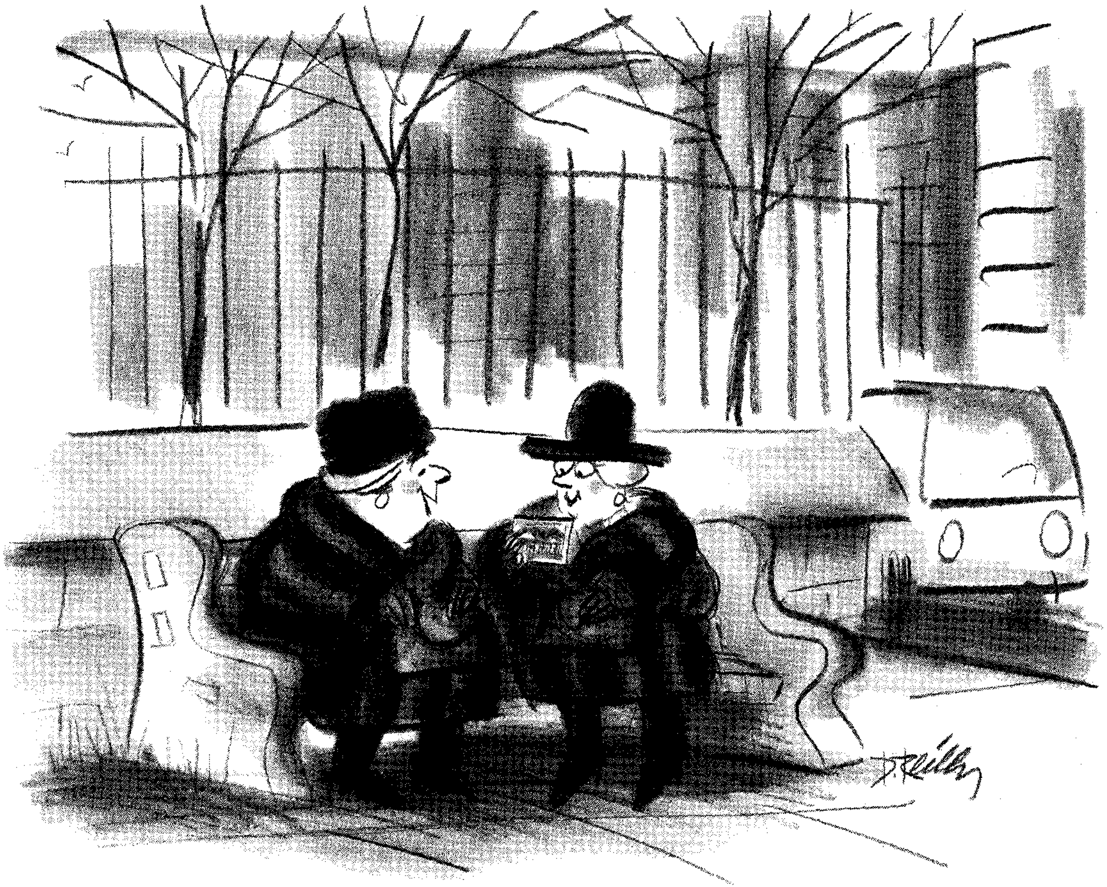
Dan Gipple, a rather intense young man, also in international marketing, spoke up. "I think that's O.K.," he said. "I think it's O.K. to call it that."

Among the things the creatives had come up with was a music video, "Fax Glorious Fax." In it a band of tattered children, employees of Fagin's Messenger Center, are, at the beginning of the story, in despair. Business is down, because they are still using telex. The children dance around in a dusty attic, singing, "Working with this dinosaur, now opportunity's passing us by, we're depressed and without self-esteem." Eventually, the children dance their way into a gray-walled postmodern office full of fax machines, around which they caper worshipfully, chorusing, "Beautiful fax! Glorious fax!" The firm is saved, the point is made: "The decline of telex, the emergence of fax," according to Ray Butkus, who gave a short speech after sharing with his guests what he called "this rather Dickensonesque scene."

The Fax Challenge campaign, Mr. Butkus explained in his speech, will involve three "invitations" mailed at one-week intervals to two hundred and fifty thousand "decision makers," urging them to fax a response form to A.T. & T. For the first challenge met, respondents will receive a faxed copy of the front page of the same day's *Asian Wall Street Journal;* for the second, a faxed *Sports Illustrated* "closeup" on this summer's Olympics in Seoul; for the third, a faxed copy of the same night's menu from Les Princes Restaurant of the Hôtel George V in Paris. Meanwhile, the secretaries of the targeted—the *challenged*—executives will receive mailings urging *them* to fax a response that will qualify them for a sweepstakes with prizes including a vacation for two at the Half Moon Club in Montego Bay, Jamaica. "Reinforcing behavior is part of the approach here," Mr. Butkus said. "It uses the product to promote the product. As far as we can tell, our program is innovative and unique in that it's interactive and results in virtually immediate fulfillment."

Dan Thomas, a writer for *DM News*—"DM" is advertisingese for "direct marketing"—looked dubious. Although several representatives of A.T. & T. had assured us all that using a fax machine was as easy as dialling a telephone, Mr. Thomas told a companion, rather loudly, "I tried to use ours once or twice, but it just beeped, and so forth. It kept telling me 'Keypad. Keypad.' It's the same one they're selling here. I had to call the secretary."

Barbara Coulter, an A.T. & T. product manager, couldn't help overhearing Mr. Thomas's remarks, and after eliciting from him some details about the fax machine at *DM News* she declared that it was not the same machine that was on display near the lectern in the Radio City Suite. Mr. Thomas swore that it was. They were unable to settle the matter. Afterward, Mr. Thomas told us, "I'm paid to be skeptical."



"Oh, really? My son-in-law is doing a little time there, too!"

We're paid to be skeptical, too, but we are not paid to stand for hours in line with our information-industry colleagues waiting for a crack at an unfamiliar suitcase-size machine. So we skipped the hands-on fax demonstration and drifted toward the Rainbow Room's windows.

The Rainbow Room is on the sixty-fifth floor of the RCA Building. We were looking south, and the Empire State and the World Trade Center were the only buildings definitely higher than we were; the Pan Am Building and the spire of the Chrysler Building were at more or less our level. It was a brilliant day, and we thought we could make out Philadelphia. Then, looking far down, we could see an L-shaped red brick building nestled in the shadows of taller neighbors: our office. Just the kind of place, we realized, where a single fax machine is still kept in a central data-processing center, under the control of an office manager. We didn't feel depressed and without self-esteem, though. We felt challenged. Then we felt distracted. Near us, several A.T. & T. employees were playing with some of the antique radios that adorn the Radio City Suite. The radios are beautiful: small, bold triumphs of modernist design, with green and yellow plastic bodies, glowing red and golden faces, and names like Bendix, Addison, Emerson, and Fada. The A.T. & T. people were excited because they had got one of the radios to work. "You see, you see, these are vacuum-tube radios!" said an older man with a flushed face and a big grin. "They just take a while to warm up."

Sound Effects

"A LOT of book publishers are turning their books into audiocassettes," a man named Arthur Miller explained to us at a recording studio the other day. He has a shock of frizzy gray hair and was wearing aviator sunglasses and a loud blue Hawaiian shirt. "Some cassettes are just the author reading, but lately they've jazzed them up—turned them into radio plays. The sound effects for them are a combination of live noises, which I make during the performance, and effects added later in the studio—the same way they do music, where they lay down the drums and guitar tracks and later add horns. I'll do footsteps, and doors opening and closing, and later we'll add a rocket ship taking off, a big explosion, or a background of wind through the trees. We call those drops, because they're dropped in after the basic noises have been put in."

That day, Arthur was getting ready to do the sound for a series of science-fiction cassettes based on the novels of L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of scientology. He stood in a corner of the studio with a cluttered table of props in front of him, a red fake door to his right, more clutter on the floor behind him (miniature bedsprings, bundles of cloth, several pairs of shoes), and a selection of stones and wooden boards next to his feet, ready for him to walk, skip, march, or run on. He took a pair of children's shoes and walked them through a shallow box of gravel on the table. "Footsteps in gravel," he said. "Here's earth." He tromped the shoes through a box filled with kitty litter. He turned abruptly and opened the fake door, which had a good, slow squeak, and then pointed to his feet. "See, I have a microphone down there. I can use my feet *and* hands to walk." He pranced the shoes on the table while walking in place. Then he picked up a piece of slate and slid it over a wooden board while he sprayed an aerosol can toward it. "Air locks! You know when you open a spaceship?" He held up a sturdy balloon with ball bearings inside. "A small explosion." He shook the balloon slightly but steadily, and, sure enough, we heard a distant blast.

"It's a mix of suggestion and real sound," he said as he led us toward a waiting area outside the studio. "I like to think of myself as the percussionist. A big part of it is timing. We're not looking for realism—these aren't stories about footsteps and doors. It's like the lighting of a stage play. If you take the sounds for granted, I know I've done my job properly." He added, "When I was doing a series of Louis L'Amour novels, I had to learn all the different horsy gaits—walking, galloping, cantering." He drummed his fingers on a table. "Tiddley-rump, tiddley-rump. It's fine points like that. It was very important that they be the right gaits. If the horse is supposed to be cantering, I want it to sound like cantering. On the other hand, my guess is that only one per cent of the people know the difference. As always with the sound-effects business, less is more."

Arthur told us that he and his director, Charles Potter, were inspired by the "CBS Radio Mystery Theatre," and that he'd sat in on a few of the show's sessions. "Some of the techniques we use are actual old radio techniques," he said. "For example, for marching feet we use a simple wooden device—blocks strung together on a frame—that you hang above a surface and shake. Some of it's popular knowledge. Charlie and I are famous for going through the garbage looking for the right piece of wood or metal. The wrong spoon on a plate might not sound like a spoon on a plate. I love sound, I love music. I listened to the old radio dramas—'The Lone Ranger,' 'Gangbusters,' 'The Shadow.' As far back as I can remember, I knew the sounds were artificial. Gee whizz, there was a sound-effects kit, like a magic kit. When I was eight, nine, or ten, somebody got me one of those. You know—crinkling cellophane for fire. I was always interested in things like that."

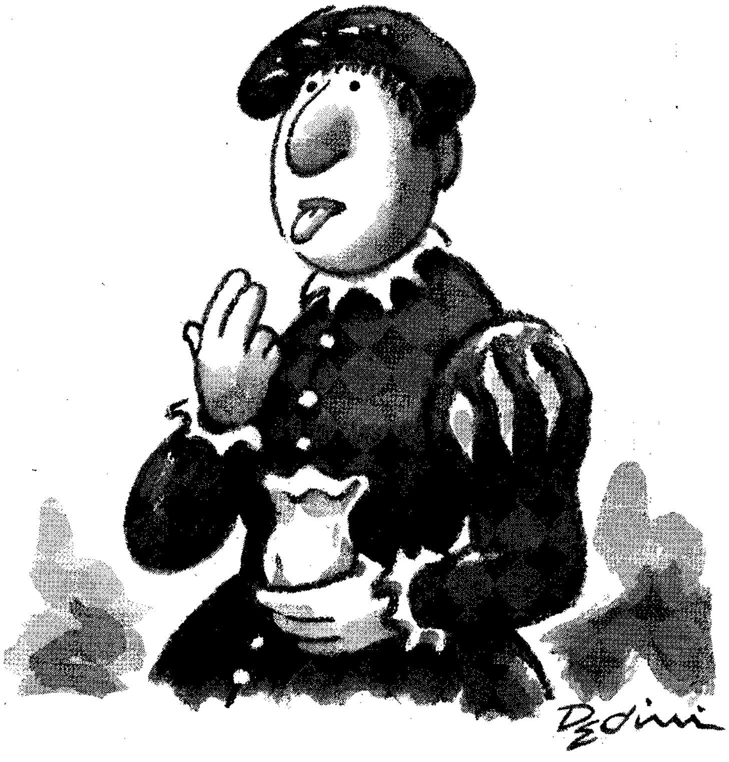
Charles Potter leaned out of the control booth. "Arthur, you can come and do some chains in the dungeon," he said. "I'm going to do some loops."

A loop, Arthur explained on the way back into the studio, is a short take that can be played over and over to add background noise to the master tape. He took his position behind the table, pulled a chain out of the clutter, and draped it around his neck. The actors doing the voices stood at microphones, poised to moan.

Charles directed them from behind the window of the booth: "You're not saying anything—just moan. Arthur, you can moan, too."

Arthur jostled the chain around his neck, moaned, and scraped an iron hinge back and forth on a piece of stone, his hands scrambling across the prop table. The actors moaned in agony.

"Please, could I have echoing footsteps on stone," Charles ordered.



Marco Polo Discovers Monosodium Glutamate

"Very little on the chains, mostly footsteps."

On the next take, the script called for someone to enter the dungeon. For this, Arthur jangled a set of keys and opened the fake door. The actors moaned even louder.

"Now we're in the dungeon, and we need men at work," Charles said. The actors resumed their moaning, and Arthur dragged a canvas bag and a whisk broom across a board, flicked switches, and threw in a few scrapes of the iron hinge. He did all this so quickly that it appeared to be a single motion.

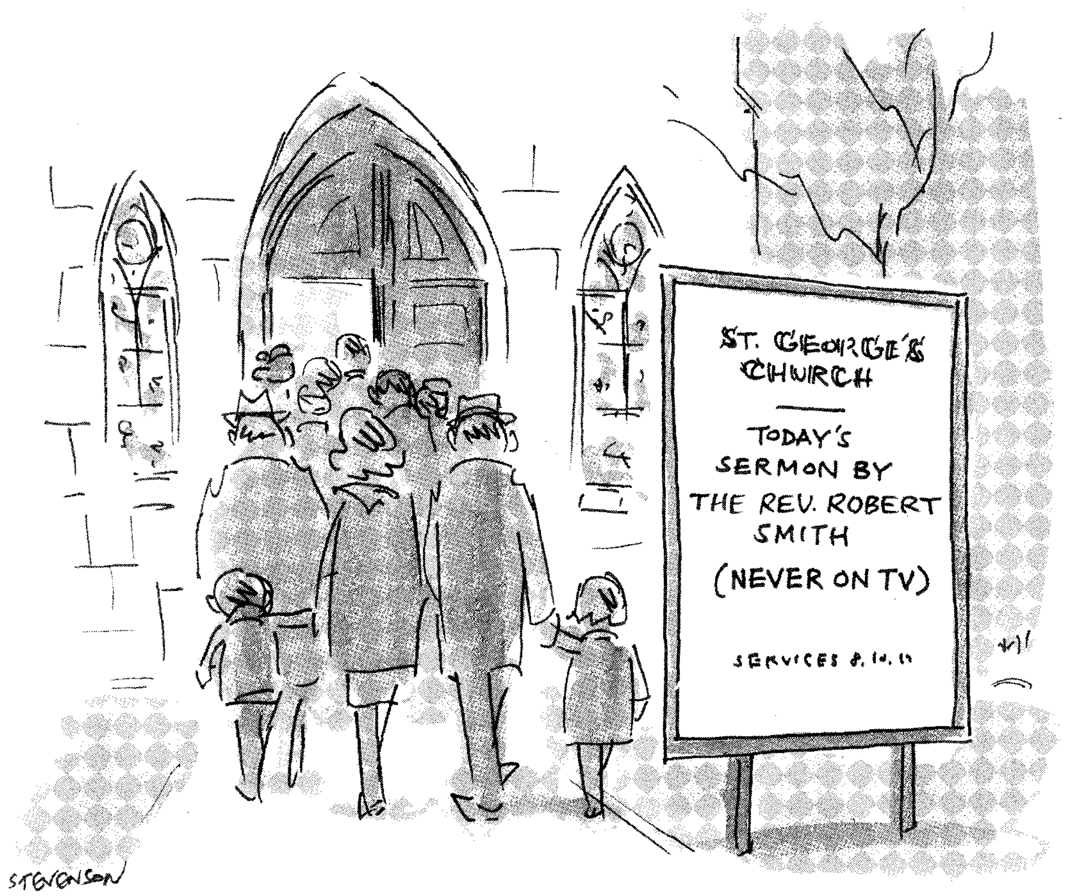
"Thank you, gentlemen," Charles said when things calmed down. "That was just beautiful."

"Great texture, Arthur," the engineer said. "Great texture."

Dog Park

A FRIEND who lives in Chelsea writes:

Last April, I got a dog. I wasn't sure this was a good idea, but it turns out that keeping a dog here isn't such a big deal. You don't have to worry about the dog's getting shot by hunters or poisoned, and a dog is really very happy to live in the house with you all the time, and not be kicked out in the back yard when the sun goes down or up, or whatever. Anyway, I started walking my dog, Wanda, after she had her shots, and one night I discovered a park in the neighborhood that I've come to think of as the dog park. It's a little patch of pavement at the corner of Tenth Avenue and Twenty-second Street, and it's named after Clement Clarke Moore, of "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" fame. The first time Wanda and I went there, we met Joyce, who had her new dog, Sam, with her. The dogs played, and Joyce and I went through the usual dog owners' questions: "How old's your dog?" "Boy or girl?" "Where did you get her?" "Who's your vet?" Then Joyce told me there was a 7 A.M. dog group in the park, an eight-thirty dog group, one at ten, one at two, and an evening group,



which started around five-thirty and went on to eight or so. As she left, she said, "Have you met Hal yet? He's a man, not a dog." I said no. Joyce said, "Oh, you will. See ya."

Next day, Wanda and I went to the park and met Joe and his dog, a bull-terrier puppy, named Thatcher, that already weighed thirty pounds. Joe told me, "It's funny—you get to know everyone's dog here after a while. You probably won't learn the names of most of the owners, but you'll know all the dogs' names." He told me he had a big sailboat and wanted to have a party for all the dog people, so the dogs could have a day on the ocean. He said he thought the dogs would love it. Then Joe asked if I had met Hal yet. That first week, four people at the park asked if I had met Hal.

Finally, one Saturday afternoon in the park, a man with a big black dog that looked like a goat came over to me and introduced himself. He was Hal. I told Hal I had heard a lot about him. Hal said, "I own the park. And this is Panther. Say hello, Panther." Panther was holding a little blue ball in his mouth. He gave me what I'm pretty sure was a dirty look, and then he walked away. Hal asked the dog owners' questions, and then issued some advice and instructions: "Don't have your dog spayed before she's two years old. Don't cross the street with her on a loose leash—keep her close to you. I'm always telling people I see to tighten their leash, because there are a lot of wild drivers around here and they'll hit your dog. Don't tie her up outside a store and walk off—someone will steal her. They sell dogs to laboratories, you know." Hal is a handsome middle-aged man who lives alone, and he's an authority on Chelsea and all the dogs in Chelsea.

I've never made it to a 7 A.M. gathering, but I've been to enough of the others to get to know most of the cast of characters. Besides Joyce and Sam, Joe and Thatcher, and Hal and Panther, there's John and Archie, a cabaret singer and Baby Dog, a French or Italian guy and Benno, Bill and William, Joan and a dog whose name no one can pronounce, a professional dog walker and his own dog, Wing Nut, a man in a fedora and Oriane (you have to say "Oriane" with a French trill or the dog doesn't recognize her name), and an artist and his stray, Vanna, who is little and is always growling and looks as if Dr. Seuss had created her. There's also a cosmopolitan woman with a big country dog, Abou, and Kevin with Lucky and Rex, Merrill with Chelsea (there are at least five Chelseas in the neighborhood), Mike with his cocker spaniel, Spike, and a hippie with Poncho. And there's a dog named Butch, who is owned by an older guy who works for a limousine service and lets Butch run all over the place. People have reported seeing Butch as far downtown as the Village. Butch is very stoic-looking. He stands at street corners and waits until there is no traffic and then crosses.

While the owners mill around in the park watching their dogs chase and wrestle each other, they exchange dog gossip: "Abou got porcupine quills in his nose." "Chelsea has pinkeye." "Sam jumped into a car when the door was open and terrorized a whole family." "Thatcher ate a Walkman and had to have surgery." "Butch was on Broadway the other day." "Thatcher ate some kind of appliance and almost had to have surgery." "Sam ate Joyce's couch." "Thatcher got sent to obedience camp." Etc.

Summer came, and a lot of people either went away or just stopped coming to the park, because it got very dirty and a lot of street people began living there. Then the fall brought most of the dog people back—at least, from time to time—except for Joe and Thatcher. Everyone was asking about Joe. John kept saying, "I haven't seen Joe since Thatcher tried to bite me and ripped the cuff off my coat sleeve." Hal kept saying, "There are some dogs that just aren't meant to be pets. They're not bred right." Then, one night recently, Joyce came around and said, "I've got to tell you this. I ran into Joe and Thatcher. Thatcher was wearing this huge, spiked collar, and Joe was carrying a long, skinny white stick that he's supposed to tap Thatcher with every time he does something wrong. He kept tapping and tapping him the whole time. While he was tapping, the dog was growling. Joe told me he entered Thatcher in a look-alike contest. Thatcher won, and got to imitate Spuds MacKenzie on a beer commercial."

SHOELACE

My left shoelace snapped at the office just before lunch. At some earlier point in the morning, my left shoe had become untied, and as I sat at my desk working on a memo my foot sensed its potential freedom and slipped out of the sauna of black cordovan to soothe itself with rhythmic movements over an area of wall-to-wall carpeting under my desk, which, unlike the tamped-down areas of public traffic, was still almost as soft and fibrous as it had been when first installed. Only under the desks and in the little-used conference rooms was the pile still plush enough to hold the beautiful “M”s and “V”s the night crew left as strokes of their vacuum cleaners' wands made swaths of dustless tufting lean in directions that alternately absorbed and reflected the light. As I worked, my foot had, without any sanction from my conscious will, slipped from the untied shoe and sought out the texture of the carpeting, although now, as I reconstruct the moment, I realize that a more specialized desire was at work as well: when you slide a socked foot over a carpeted surface, the fibres of sock and carpet mesh and lock, so that though you think you are enjoying the texture of the carpeting, you are really enjoying the slippage of the inner surface of the sock against the underside of your foot, something you normally only get to experience in the morning when you first pull the sock on.[1]

At a few minutes before twelve, I stopped working, removed and threw out my earplugs and, more carefully, the remainder of my morning coffee—placing it upright within the converging spinnakers of the trash-can liner on the base of the receptacle itself. I stapled a copy of a memo someone had cc:'d me on to a copy of an earlier memo I had written on the same subject and wrote at the top to my manager, in my best casual scrawl, “Abe—should I keep hammering on these people or drop it?” I put the stapled papers in one of my Eldon trays, not sure whether I would forward them to Abelardo or not. Then I slipped my shoe back on by flipping it on its side, hooking it with my foot, and shaking it into place. I accomplished all this by foot-feel; and when I crouched forward, over the papers on my desk, to reach the untied shoelace, I experienced a faint surge of pride in being able to tie a shoe without looking at it.

At that moment, Dave, Sue, and Steve, on their way to lunch, waved as they passed by my office. Right in the middle of tying a shoe as I was, I couldn't wave nonchalantly back, so I called out a startled, overhearty “Have a good one, guys!” They disappeared. I pulled the left shoelace tight, and, *bingo*, it broke.

The curve of incredulousness and resignation I rode out at that moment was a kind caused in life by a certain class of events, disruptions of physical routines, such as:

(a) reaching a top step but thinking there is another step there and stamping down on the landing

(b) pulling on the red thread that is supposed to butterfly a Band-Aid wrapper and having it wrest free from the paper without tearing it

(c) drawing a piece of Scotch Tape from the roll that resides half sunk in its black, weighted Duesenberg of a dispenser, hearing the slightly descending whisper of adhesive-coated plastic detaching itself from the back of the tape to come (descending in pitch because the strip, while amplifying the sound, is also getting longer as you pull on it[2]), and then, just as you are intending to break the piece off over the metal serration, reaching the innermost end of the roll, so that the segment you have been pulling wafts unexpectedly free. Especially now, with the rise of Post-it notes, which have made the massive black tape dispensers seem even more grandiose and Biedermeier and tragically defunct, you almost believe that you will never come to the end of a roll of tape; and when you do, there is a feeling, nearly, though very briefly, of shock and grief

(d) attempting to staple a thick memo, and looking forward, as you begin to lean on the brontosaural head of the stapler arm,[3] to the three phases of the act—

first, before the stapler arm makes contact with the paper, the resistance of the spring that keeps the arm held up;

then, *second*, the moment when the small independent unit in the stapler arm noses into the paper and begins to force the two points of the staple into and through it; and,

third, the felt crunch, like the chewing of an ice cube, as the twin tines of the staple emerge from the underside of the paper and are bent by the two troughs of the template in the stapler's base, curving inward in a crab's embrace of your memo, and finally disengaging from the machine completely—

but finding, as you lean on the stapler with your elbow locked and your breath held and it slumps toothlessly to the paper, that it has run out of staples. How could something this consistent, this incremental, betray you? (But then you are consoled: you

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[1] When I pull a sock on, I no longer *pre-bunch;* that is, I don't gather the sock up into telescoped folds over my thumbs and then position the resultant doughnut over my toes, even though I believed for some years that this was a clever trick, taught by admirable, fresh-faced kindergarten teachers, and that I revealed my laziness and my inability to plan ahead by instead holding the sock by the ankle rim and jamming my foot to its destination, working the ankle a few times to properly seat the heel. Why? The more elegant pre-bunching can leave in place any pieces of grit that have embedded themselves in your sole from the imperfectly swept floor you walked on to get from the shower to your room, while the cruder, more direct method, though it risks tearing an older sock, does detach this grit during the foot's downward passage, so that you seldom later feel irritating particles rolling around under your arch as you depart for the subway.

[2] When I was little I thought it was called Scotch Tape because the word “Scotch” imitated the descending screech of early cellophane tapes. As incandescence gave way before fluorescence in office lighting, Scotch Tape, once yellowish-transparent, became bluish-transparent, as well as superbly quiet.

[3] Staplers have followed, lagging by about ten years, the broad stylistic changes we have witnessed in train locomotives and phonograph tonearms, both of which they resemble. The oldest staplers are cast-ironic and upright, like coal-fired locomotives and Edison wax-cylinder players. Then, in mid-century, as locomotive manufacturers discovered the word “streamlined,” and as tonearm designers housed the stylus in aerodynamic ribbed plastic hoods that looked like a train curving around a mountain, the people at Swingline and Bates tagged along, instinctively sensing that staplers were like locomotives in that the two prongs of the staple make contact with a pair of metal hollows which, like the paired rails under the wheels of the train, forces them to follow a pre-set path, and that they were like phonograph tonearms in that both machines, roughly the same size, make sharp points of contact with their respective media of informational storage. (In the case of the tonearm, the stylus retrieves the information, while in the case of the stapler the staple binds it together as a unit—the order, the shipping paper, the invoice: *boom,* stapled, a unit; the letter of complaint, the copies of cancelled checks and receipts, the letter of apologetic response: *boom,* stapled, a unit; a sequence of memos and telexes holding the history of some interdepartmental controversy: *boom,* stapled, one controversy. In old stapled problems, you can see the t.b. vaccine marks in the upper-left corner where staples have been removed and replaced, removed and replaced, as the problem—even the staple holes of the problem—was copied and sent on to other departments for further action, copying, and stapling.) And then the great era of squareness set in: BART was the ideal for trains, while AR and Bang & Olufsen turntables became angular—no more cream-colored bulbs of plastic! The people at Bates and Swingline again were drawn along, ridding their devices of all softening curvatures and offering black rather than the interestingly textured tan. And now, of course, the high-speed trains of France and Japan have reverted to aerodynamic profiles reminiscent of *Popular Science* cities-of-the-future covers of the fifties; and soon the stapler will incorporate a toned-down pompadour swoop as well. Sadly, the tonearm's stylistic progress has slowed, because all the buyers who would appreciate an up-to-date Soviet Realism in the design are buying CD players: its inspirational era is over.

get to reload it, laying bare the stapler arm and dropping a long zithering row of staples into place; and later, on the phone, you get to toy with the piece of the staples you couldn't fit into the stapler, breaking it into smaller segments, making them dangle on a hinge of glue.)

In the aftermath of the broken-shoelace disappointment, irrationally, I pictured Dave, Sue, and Steve as I had just seen them and thought, "Cheerful wipe-heads!" because I had probably broken the shoelace by transferring the social energy that I had had to muster in order to deliver a chummy "Have a good one!" to them from my awkward shoe tier's crouch into the force I had used in pulling on the shoelace. Of course, it would have worn out sooner or later anyway. It was the original shoelace, and the shoes were the very ones my father had bought me two years earlier, just after I had started this job, my first out of college—so the breakage was a sentimental milestone of sorts. I rolled back in my chair to study the rupture, imagining the smiles on my three co-workers' faces suddenly vanishing if I had really called them cheerful wipe-heads, and regretting this burst of ill-feeling toward them.

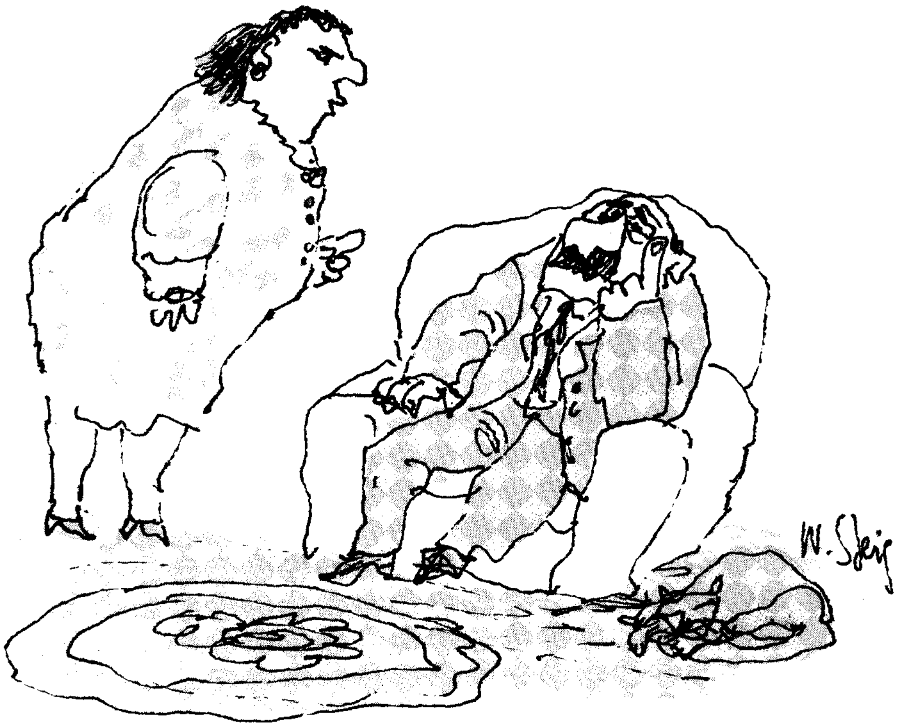
As soon as my gaze fell to my shoes, however, I was reminded of something that should have struck me the instant the shoelace had first snapped. The day before, as I was getting ready for work, my *other* shoelace, the right one, had snapped, too, as I was yanking it tight to tie it, under very similar circumstances. I repaired it with a knot, just as I was planning to do now with the left. I was surprised—more than surprised—to think that after almost two years my right and left shoelaces could fail less than two days apart. Apparently my shoe-tying routine was so unvarying and robotic that over those hundreds of mornings I had inflicted identical levels of wear on both laces. The near-simultaneity was exciting—it made the variables of private life seem suddenly graspable and law-abiding.

I moistened the splayed threads of the snapped-off piece and twirled them into a damp, unwholesome minaret. Breathing steadily and softly through my nose, I was able to guide the saliva-sharpened leader thread through the eyelet without too much trouble. And then I grew uncertain. In order for the shoelaces to have worn to the breaking point on almost the same day, they would have had to be tied almost exactly the same number of times. But when Dave, Sue, and Steve passed my office door, I had been in the middle of tying one shoe—*one shoe only*. And in the course of a normal day it wasn't at all unusual for one shoe to come untied independent of the other. In the morning, of course, you always tied both shoes, but random midday comings-undone would have to have constituted a significant proportion of the total wear on both of these broken laces, I felt—possibly thirty per cent. And how could I be positive that this thirty per cent was equally distributed—that right and left shoes had come randomly undone over the last two years with the same frequency?

I tried to call up some sample memories of shoe tying to determine whether one shoe tended to come untied more often than another. What I found was that I did not retain a single specific engram of tying a shoe, or a pair of shoes, that dated from any later than when I was four or five years old, the age that I had first learned the skill. Over twenty years of empirical data was lost forever, a complete blank. But I suppose this is often true of moments of life that are remembered as major advances: the discovery is the crucial thing, not its repeated later applications. As it happened, the first *three* major advances in my life, and I will list all the advances here—

1. shoe tying
2. pulling up on shoelaces before tying
3. steadying hand against sneaker when tying
4. brushing tongue as well as teeth
5. putting on deodorant after I was fully dressed
6. discovering that sweeping was fun
7. ordering a rubber stamp with my address on it to make bill paying more efficient
8. deciding that brain cells ought to die—

have to do with shoe tying, but I don't think that this fact is very unusual. Shoes are the first adult machines we are given to master. I made several attempts to learn the skill, but it was not until my mother placed a lamp on the floor so that I could clearly see the dark laces of a pair of new dress shoes that I really mastered it; she explained again how to form the introductory platform knot, which began high in the air as a frail, heart-shaped loop, and shrank as you pulled the plastic lace tips down to a short twisted kernel three-eighths of an inch long, and she showed me how to progress from that base to the main cotyledonary string figure, which was, as it turned out, not a true knot but an illusion, a trick that you performed on the lace string by bending segments of it back on themselves and tightening other temporary bends around them: it looked like a knot and functioned like a knot, but the whole thing was really an amaz-



"Yes or no?"

ing interdependent pyramid scheme, which much later I connected with a couplet of Pope's:

> Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives;
> The strength he gains is from th'embrace he gives.

Another advance I made by myself in the middle of a playground, when I halted, out of breath, to tie a sneaker,[4] my mouth on my interesting-smelling knee, a closeup view of anthills and the tread marks of other sneakers before me (the best kind, Keds, I think, or Red Ball Flyers, had a perimeter of asymmetrical triangles, and a few concavities in the center which printed perfect domes of dust), and found as I retied the shoe that I was doing it automatically, without having to concentrate on it as I had done at first, and, more important, that somewhere over the past year since I had first learned the basic moves I had evidently evolved two little sub-steps of my own *that nobody had showed me*. In one I *held down a temporarily taut stretch* of shoelace with the side of my thumb; in the other I stabilized my hand with a middle finger propped against the side of the sneaker during some final manipulations. The advance here was my recognition that I had independently developed refinements of technique in an area where nobody had indicated there were refinements to be found: I had personalized an already adult procedure.

After I finished the repair knot, a lump with two frizzed ends just below the top pair of eyelets, I pulled on the tongue of the shoe—one of the little preludes to tying that my father had showed me—and gingerly began the regulation knot. I took special care *to scale down the bunny's ear that I* had to form from the now shorter lace end, so that there would be enough leeway to pull it tight without mishap.[5]

When the lace was finally tied, I tapped both shoe toes on the carpeting and said, shaking my head, "Nothing holds me back for long, man." Then I stood, rolled my chair back into place, and took a step toward my office door.

But as soon as I took that step I experienced a sharpening of dissatisfaction with the whole notion that my daily acts of shoe tying could have alone worn out my shoelaces. What about the variety of tiny stretchings and pullings that the shoe itself exerted on its laces as I walked around? Walking was what wore down my heels; *walking was what put the* creases in my shoe toes—was I supposed to discount the significance of walking in the chafing of my laces? I remembered shots in movies of a rope that held up a bridge cutting itself against a sharp rock as the bridge swayed. Even if the shoelace's fabric moved only millimetrically against its eyelet with each step, that sawing back and forth might eventually cut through the outer fibres, though the lace would not actually pop until a relatively large force, such as the first tug I gave it when tying, was applied.

All right! Much better! This walking-flexion model (as I styled it to myself, in opposition to the earlier pulling-and-fraying model) accounted *for the coincidence of yesterday's* and today's breakages very well, I thought. Still, if it were true that the laces frayed from walking flexion, why did they invariably fray only in contact with the top pair of eyelets on each shoe? I paused in my doorway, looking out at the rest of the office, resisting this further unwelcome puzzlement. I had never heard of a shoelace parting over some middle eyelet. Possibly the stress of walking fell most forcefully on the lace bent around the top eyelets, just as the stress of pulling the laces tight to tie them did. It was conceivable, though scary to imagine, that the pull-fray model and the walk-flex model mingled their coefficients so subtly that human agency would never accurately apportion cause.

Freed, for the instant, from further lace concern, I moved the green magnetized plastic puck next to my name on the sign-out board from IN to OUT, bringing it in line with Dave's, Sue's, and Steve's pucks, wrote "Lunch," in matching green Magic Marker, in the space provided for explanation, and walked out without a care in the world.

—Nicholson Baker

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[4] Sneaker knots were quite different from dress knots—when you pulled the two loops tight at the end, the logic of the knot you had just created became untraceable; while in the case of dress-lace knots you could, even after tightening, follow the path of the knot around with your mind, as if riding a roller coaster. You could imagine a sneaker-shoelace and a dress-shoelace knot standing side by side saying the pledge of allegiance: the dress-shoelace knot would pronounce each word as a grammatical unit, understanding it as more than a sound; the sneaker-shoelace knot would run the words together. The great advantage of sneakers, though, one of the many advantages, was that when you had tied them tightly, without wearing socks, and worn them all day, and gotten them wet, and taken them off before bed, your feet would display the impression of the chrome eyelets in red rows down the sides of your foot, like the portholes in a Jules Verne submarine.

[5] I don't like it when you end up with only one of the two bunny's ears that make up a normal bow, for if for some reason the lace end forming that one ear works free you have no backup and you end up with a square knot that you have to tease untied with your fingernails, blood rushing to your head.

BLAZER

Sweet Life trucks came and went constantly on the interstate behind the high school, bearing groceries to far-flung supermarkets. The trucks were yellow and had different inspirational messages on their sides, and the students, perennially bored, had begun to keep track of them: "A Child Is a Gift from God!" "To Have a Friend—You Must Be One!" "We Are All Brothers and Sisters!"

The first odd thing to happen on this Saturday night was that a Sweet Life truck stopped at Burger King. The bunch who spent a lot of time hanging around in the parking lot had never seen that before. "Hug a Senior Citizen Today!" the truck proclaimed, and Rudy D'Angelo, who was beside the dumpster, stiff-armed Jeff Fontaine in the shoulder and yelled, "Hey! This truck's for you!" He waved his arms. "Jeff'll hug her tonight! He'll hug her tonight!"

It got a few laughs. There were about twenty juniors and seniors gathered around their cars and pickup trucks. After a while, the Sweet Life driver returned with his hamburger and climbed into the cab and then the truck moved off slowly—a yellow curtain withdrawing to reveal a panorama of traprock and sumac bushes behind the restaurant. Beyond the blacktop, a steep bank descended to a neighborhood of small ranch houses. The bizarre, shaggy objects over there were sections of trees that happened to catch the full blast of the street lamps. Farther off were the headlights on I-91.

"Just shut up," Jeff said to Rudy. Jeff was having an affair with a second-grade teacher—theoretically a secret, although the news had gotten around pretty fast. Rudy even knew the teacher's name: Veronica Pinsky.

In a moment Rudy was bellowing over the sumac bushes. "She don't love me, she just loves Darryl Straw-b'ry," he sang, to the tune of the ZZ Top song "She Don't Love Me, She Loves My Automobile." This was a reference to his own girlfriend, Diane, who had the usual number of defects, and not to Jeff's, who was in her mid-twenties and perfect enough, in Rudy's opinion, to be noticed by rock stars. Diane wasn't around tonight because she and Rudy had had a fight.

Jeff was a friend from the baseball team. He was probably the best pitcher in the Central Connecticut Conference; he hadn't lost a game in two years. He would be going to Wesleyan in the fall. Rudy, a junior, pitched only in relief—in fact, he pitched only when the team was a long way behind. He tended to give up a lot of line drives.

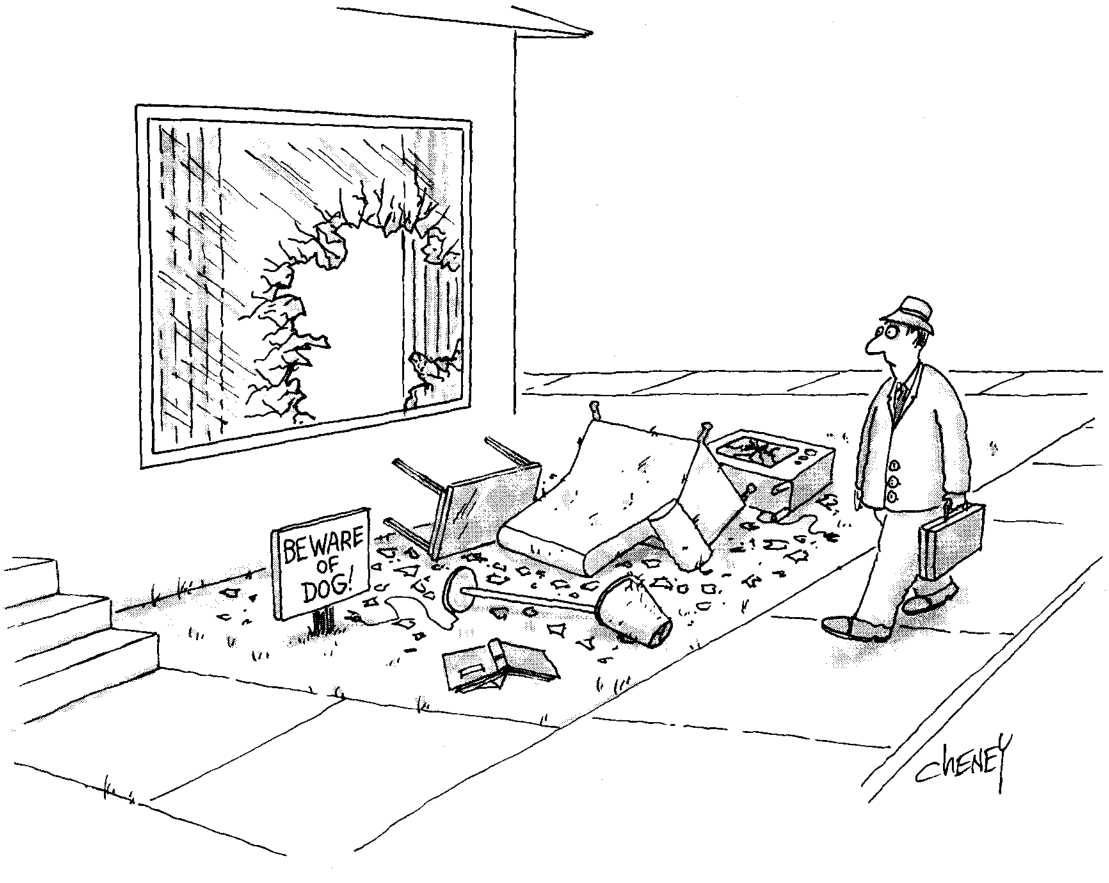
The song was also because Rudy and Jeff and Mark Spaginsky had gone to the ZZ Top concert Thursday night at the New Haven Coliseum. Spaginsky was the only one who had liked the show. He wasn't so much a friend as someone Rudy tolerated. Most of Rudy's friends were looking for summer jobs, but Spaginsky was facing the prospect of a month at a computer-adventure camp and was fighting with his parents to get out of it.

"You're acting like a jerk," Spaginsky told Rudy now.

"I don't take shit from you!" Rudy said, genuinely angry. "You *belong* in computer-adventure camp, you stupid yuppie."

THERE had been a big crowd at Paul Bacewicz's funeral a month earlier—anyone who had a motorcycle had ridden it to the mortuary and from there to the church. The priest seemed upset. The newspaper ran an editorial about failure to learn from tragedy. Bacewicz had died when his Kawasaki Ninja hit a parked car on a narrow neighborhood street. The police claimed he was going fifty miles per hour and had his front wheel off the ground. No one at the high school was surprised about that; it was the way Bacewicz often drove. The accident didn't discourage anyone from riding motorcycles. In fact, a few of the kids who didn't have motorcycles went out and bought them afterward, and some of Bacewicz's classmates put bumper stickers on their cars exhorting drivers to watch out for motorcyclists. Bacewicz had been the third casualty since the start of the year, if you counted the snowmobile accident back in February, in which Bobby Hurteau was killed. There had also been Doug Goldberg's broken leg in a motorcycle wreck in April. Now it was early June. There were three weeks of school left.

Rudy used to have a Honda with red



SPRING TAKES THE HOMEPLACE

A long wet winter since I saw the house
Pounded hard by August sun—
Choked in stands of waist-high grass,
The lumber scrap of renovation—
And even now, all I have is pictures:
A cousin's color snaps last fall.
The grass is scythed, the scrap hauled off,
The view from the window where I saw light
That bleak first day is clear again—
Straight sight to the road I took to leave
More or less for good, barring childhood visits
To Ida, not the place (Aunt Ida, saint
Of my saint-strewn life).
                                        It's stood through
Three snows, hard sleet, the quick reversal
Of a ten-year drought—empty still,
No tenant yet. At least I've heard
No word of fire; so it must stand
Or crouch (*crouch* or *lie*?)—snoozing snake
Laid on the long lot, digesting its century
Of food: our lives (Rodwells, Drakes,
Prices, Rowans, Huffmans, Swifts).

None of us there to meet the spring,
Throw the doors wide on green-gold light,
And acknowledge the silent service of walls,
A good tin roof, and heart-pine floors
Through hateful cold.
                                    So from this distance—
Eighty miles—I grant its virtue,
Grant our thanks (living and dead).
And these eyes roam the yard in memory,
Hunting a bloom to deck the door.

Ida's roses were long since blighted
To thorny sticks, razed, and burned.
The rows of annuals long since a wilderness,
Only the tall old fig survives—
Backed against Buck Thompson's shed
(Where he stored the coffins he sold, a sideline
With sweet potatoes and bright-leaf tobacco).

Life creeps up dry spongy pith
Of limbs that still bear pounds of figs
For cardinals now or cocky jays,
To sticky milk of ancient sap—
Loyal, punctual, undeterred.
No leaves yet, no fruit till August.

But from here, in mind, I break a stick;
Wait for the sweet milk; smear my hand
With its proof of lasting, in a long straight line
(Opalescent, warm in the cool day);
Bear that to the front door, press the hand
To a brass knob turned by all my kin
Through a hundred years. The door breaks open
At last.
                Spring light! Now rush on past me,
Flood the rooms.

—Reynolds Price

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flames painted on the gas tank—one of the old 750 four-cylinders. He'd rarely lifted the front wheel. It bothered him that he was so cautious with it—it scared him even to see telephone poles going by. After Bacewicz died, his mother shrieked whenever he tried to take it out of the garage, and finally he sold it. Now all he did at night was hang around at Burger King or, if he was with Diane, stay home and watch the Mets. The night before their fight, they had watched at Rudy's house—the Mets at the Astros. "He's old," Diane said at one point. "He's going bald." She meant Nolan Ryan. "Flamethrower," the announcer said.

Diane went to St. Catherine's. When she was younger and at a different parochial school, she had once won the citywide spelling bee.

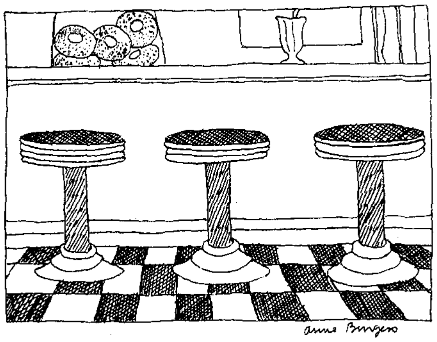
"He's already struck out Strawberry twice," Rudy said.

"Poor Darryl," Diane said. She tended to shift to baby talk when she mentioned Strawberry. She acted as if Strawberry needed to be cuddled. Rudy reached out with his big toe and punched a different channel button on the cable box, which was on the coffee table next to his father's ashtray, a ceramic Budweiser beer wagon. The screen erupted into smoke and flames, and laser beams shot into a woman's bodice. Rudy didn't recognize the music, but he liked it.

"How come you never baby-talk when you talk about me?" he said. "How come you never act like I need to be cuddled?"

"Because you're too sarcastic."

The Mets won the game, it turned out, and Diane left fairly early, although it was Friday. The next morning, the two of them went to the regional Special Olympics, which were being held at the Choate Rosemary Hall prep school, five miles away in Wallingford. Diane had to go because she and five other members of the St. Catherine's track team had volunteered to oversee the croquet and horseshoe-pitching events. They all wore makeup with their green sweatsuits and shiny green team jackets. Rudy went along to hang around. Groups of retarded athletes—mostly kids, but with a few adults mixed in—marched around the track behind the Governor's Foot Guard, a collection of elderly men wearing garish red coats and hats that resembled giant Q-Tips. The mayor gave a speech from the reviewing stand. A number of girls from the prep school wandered over from their dormitories to help with the cheering and hugging. They wore baggy sweatshirts and loose, pastel-colored shorts, and they looked sleepy. Several had hair that was still wet from their morning showers. Men from Kiwanis and Civitan were running other events—the wheelchair races and the hundred-yard walk. Rudy noticed a few of his father's



friends among them. They had knit shirts that stretched over their bellies and they smoked when they thought no one was looking. Some of the athletes asked for cigarettes, and then a counsellor complained because two members of her team had done the hundred-yard walk while holding cigarettes. Rudy saw George Angiletta, one of the Civitan officials, apologizing about this. He shrugged his shoulders and lifted his arms dramatically.

At the awards stand, a girl wearing a sash that said "Miss So. Central Conn." was handing out ribbons. She had broad cheekbones and blue eyeshadow, and wore a tight pink jumpsuit. Her long hair was bushed out in a mass of elaborate curls, and white athletic socks sprouted from her Soda Pops sneakers and covered the calves of the jumpsuit. Rudy saw the Choate Rosemary Hall girls exchanging glances behind her back. "There's a Miss South Central Connecticut," he heard one of them say.

"She looks more like Miss Pepto-Bismol," another one said, staring at the pink jumpsuit.

"That stinks," Diane said later, when Rudy told her about it. They were driving home in Diane's father's Taurus. "Who do they think they are?"

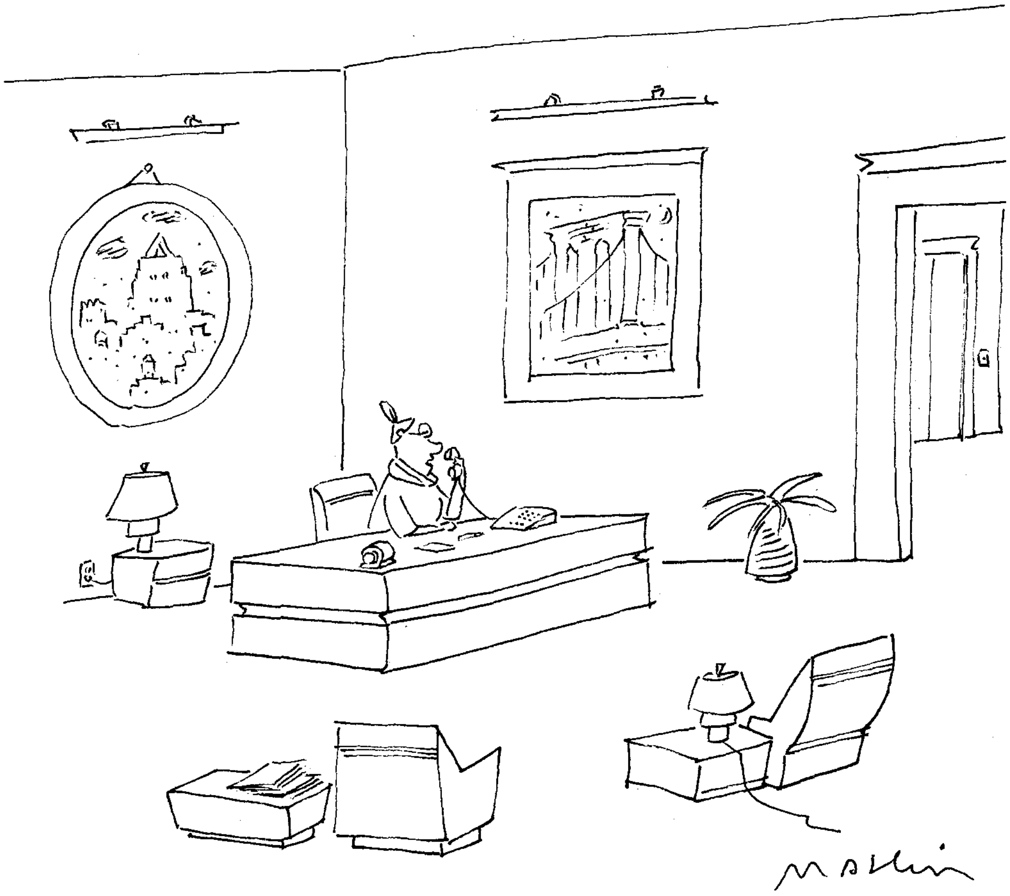
"What're you worried about? She didn't hear them."

"They were probably making fun of us, too."

"They were not."

Rudy thought of something. "Did you ever think of doing that? Any of that beauty-contest stuff?"

Diane was driving. Rudy watched the fire hydrants and parked pickup trucks zip by. They were in his neighborhood, between the Burger King Plaza and I-91. There were small religious statues on several of the side lawns and there were fibre-glass Macho canopies on the backs of some of the pickups. Blazers and Broncos were parked everywhere, rising over huge, crenellated tires. Their underskeletons and mechanical genitalia were proudly exposed, and the doors were so high that it seemed you'd need ladders to get into them.



"Mr. Kearn has stepped out of character for the afternoon. May I take a message?"

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"One thing about the girls around here," Rudy said. "When they get dressed up, they put on the dog. I mean, she was sort of asking for it."

Diane was staring through the windshield. She seemed angry.

"You can be Miss Northeast Greater Solar System if you want," Rudy said, "but let me know ahead of time so I can prepare myself for the embarrassment."

"Shut up."

Diane stopped in front of his house.

"I guess this means I don't get a kiss," Rudy said.

"She's out there like kissing retarded people, and people are making fun of her," Diane said. "What's so great about you? You just want to pitch an inning without giving up five runs, right?"

"Don't tell me to shut up. I never tell you to shut up."

"You were talking about how her makeup was thick enough to stop bullets."

"I didn't say that, *they* said that. Don't get me mixed up with any prep-school girls."

"Sure, but it's exactly the kind of thing you'd say," Diane said. "You think you have some special privilege where you can be critical all the time."

Rudy got out and shut the door and looked back through the window. Diane was wearing red fingernail polish—her hands were on the steering wheel and the polish made them look lethal.

"That's like the meanest thing you can do," she said. "Make fun of somebody's clothes. Make fun of somebody's makeup."

She drove away without looking at him.

"Burger King is closed, Spags," Rudy said. "Jester's Courtyard is closed. You should've gone home with the thirteen-year-olds. You should've gone home to listen to ZZ Top and play air guitar in front of the mirror."

It was almost midnight but the

high-school kids were still scattered around the blacktop. Car doors were open and radios and cassette-players were blasting. Saturday nights often passed this way. Spaginsky lit a cigarette. "I don't care what you say," he told Rudy. "Some of their early songs were good. 'La Grange' was good."

"That was before they decided they could make a lot of money off morons like you."

Something was wrong with Jeff's father's Blazer. It smelled like gasoline, and Jeff had parked it under a light in a corner of the lot and had the hood up. Even if Jeff could fix it, he wouldn't be going home, Rudy knew—he'd be going to visit the second-grade teacher. Rudy lived almost across the street from Jeff, but he'd have to get a ride from someone else.

"If this stupid thing's broken, Spags, my father's going to kill me," Jeff said from under the hood. "Maybe I should run away to computer-adventure camp with you. I'd rather be a total jerk than be dead."

"Keep talking about the stupid camp," Spaginsky said. "The first fifty times it was funny."

"You're going to Wesleyan, big shot," Rudy said to Jeff. "That's like a four-year computer-adventure camp."

"How do you know I'm going?" Jeff said. "I could still change my mind about it."

"Oh, right," Rudy said. "That's the best thing that ever happened to you."

Police were in the Shawmut Bank lot across the street—two cruisers with their lights on, side by side but facing in opposite directions so the cops could talk to each other window to window. The cars bristled with antennas and flashers and insignia. Over here there were Blazers and Broncos and pickup trucks. Jeff's father's Blazer had flat black paint and tires that might have gone on a moon vehicle. It was parked next to Spaginsky's father's Camry, and looked to Rudy as if it was about to crawl over the Camry and chew on it.

Jeff had WPLR on the radio. When "Born in the U.S.A." came on, he emerged from beneath the hood and ran to the door. He hopped onto the metal step his father had welded below the doorframe and reached past the steering wheel to turn up the volume. The song wasn't played that much anymore. Everywhere in the lot, radios were bringing it in.

Later on, Rudy thought of how it looked: Sara Angiletta in a jean skirt and white blouse, standing in front of Dave McCauley's Suzuki Samurai with her fist in the air, lighters flicking on here and there and being held up like torches, and the Burger King sign extinguished in the background. It was like some kind of religious ceremony; it was the way it had felt a couple of years ago, back when the song was played all the time. In the concert video, Springsteen raises his fist during the chorus, and that was what Sara was doing now. The next time the chorus came around, everyone did it. Spaginsky flicked on his lighter. He and Jeff were leaning against each other, pantomiming the way Springsteen and Nils Lofgren played their guitars together. Jeff flicked his lighter and there was a burst of light and a hot rush of air. The lighter shot upward and made a streak over the parking lot.

AFTER the ambulance left, there was a lot of self-important standing around in groups with hands on hips by the parking-lot regulars. There was also a lot of coming and going in cars by casual acquaintances and complete strangers. Traffic usually wasn't this heavy after closing, but word had gotten out that something had happened.

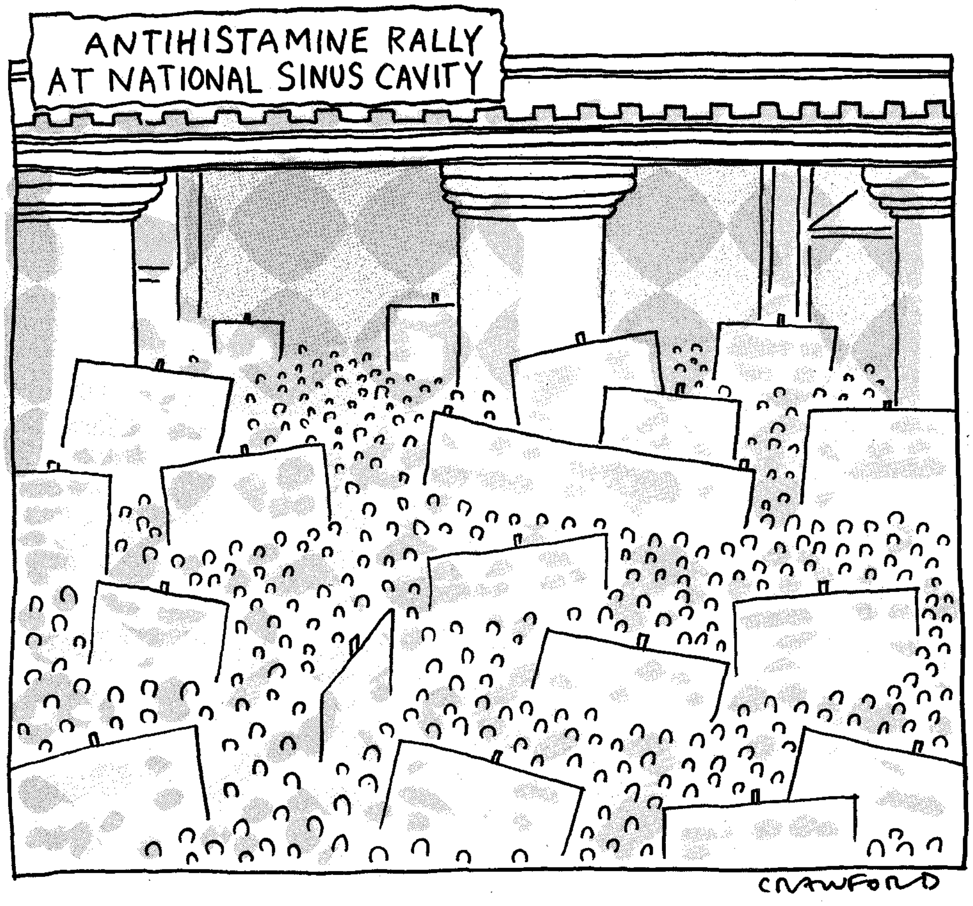
"It was like the Bud Light commercial," Spaginsky said to Rudy and Sara. "The one where the spaceships come right out of the video game and they're flying around the room and Michael Winslow's shooting them with his fingers. Jeff's lucky the Blazer didn't burn up, too."

"Those cops were pretty nice about it, except for that one guy," Sara said. "He's like, 'So this is when you're not crashing motorcycles,' and I'm like, 'It's not funny.' "

Earlier, the police had cleared out the lot, but the high-school kids were used to being routed from Burger King. Once the cruisers were gone, they were back in a matter of minutes.

Rudy went off to the hospital to see Jeff, returned to report, then went back to the hospital. Dave McCauley drove him.

"I don't want to go to Wesleyan," Jeff announced


ANTIHISTAMINE RALLY AT NATIONAL SINUS CAVITY
CRAWFORD

"You don't understand, Mom. Our staying in and watching TV is not the same as you and Dad staying home and watching TV in Dayton, Ohio."

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suddenly when Rudy had found him the second time. He was sitting on an examining table in the emergency room, and he had been sedated. He was sniffing. He was going to stay the night, he said, but the doctor wanted to talk to his parents before admitting him. "Things are just too weird," he said.

"You're just not feeling too good right now."

"I was supposed to see what's-her-name. Veronica. I was supposed to go over there."

"You want me to tell her you can't make it?" Rudy asked.

"I can't handle this shit," Jeff said. "I'm always supposed to be doing stuff."

"You don't have to see her."

"Why'm I supposed to be smarter all the time? Why'm I supposed to strike people out all the time?"

Rudy watched as Jeff looked at his hands and then moved them around cautiously. The fingers and the bottom knuckles were covered with antibiotic cream and clear bandages. The skin looked white and flaked in places. Everyone in the parking lot had seen his hands flame up and then go out. The whole thing had happened before he'd landed on the blacktop; they'd popped blue and yellow, like flashbulbs. When the lighter jumped from his hand, he'd reached up without thinking and the other hand had caught.

"What's-her-name," he said now. "She sort of . . . She hugs me a lot. She's nice and everything, but there's a lot of pressure."

Jeff's mother was a fifth-grade teacher at St. Martin's, and Rudy knew that Jeff got a lot of pressure from her, too. That was the reason he got good grades—not the standard thing in the neighborhood. She kept after him. She and Veronica Pinsky taught at the same school, and Jeff had told Rudy that his mother had even introduced him to Veronica. His mother didn't know this was going on. Sometimes Veronica came to the high-school games. She was red-haired and Rudy tended to stare at her from his spot on the bench. Sometimes she wore miniskirts and when she shifted position he could see her underpants.

The emergency-room doctor returned and said he couldn't reach Jeff's parents. He explained that gasoline burned at a very high temperature. Luckily, most of it had evaporated from Jeff's fingers before the explosion. It was really the vapor rising from his hands that went off. There were scattered first- and second-degree burns. He probably wouldn't need skin grafting. The doctor went off to arrange about admitting Jeff.

"I don't even know if it was mine that did it or not," Jeff said. "How could the flame go *down*? It might have been Spags' lighter."

"I sort of think you should go to sleep," Rudy said. "Take a nap or something until they bring you upstairs."

"Bruce Springsteen is pissed."

"What?"

"He doesn't like guys who go to Wesleyan."

"What are you talking about?"

Jeff looked around uncertainly.

"Where're your parents?" Rudy asked him.

"My father'll be pissed. I broke the Blazer. He's so crazy that one night a guy scratched it at the Moose Club and he got into a fight, and after that they wanted to kick him out of the Moose Club."

"I sort of think you should go to sleep."

"This hurts," Jeff said.

In the hospital parking lot, Rudy got back into Dave McCauley's Samurai and they drove down Main Street and out onto I-91. There was a Sweet Life truck in the next lane. Rudy had his eyes closed and didn't see it for a minute. The frame of the window was cool and felt good against his face. Then he looked up. This truck said "NEVER GO TO BED ANGRY WITH EACH OTHER!"

"Do you believe something like that happened and he wasn't even killed?" he said to Dave McCauley. "I'll tell you one thing. You and me are normal compared to a lot of people around here."

Dave said, "You're normal except for your mouth."

"Jesus," Rudy said.

There wasn't much traffic on the

highway. They went over a bridge and past a flashing Mobil sign and then Rudy asked Dave to drop him off at Diane's house. When he got there, he bounced pennies off her window until she came down in her bathrobe and let him in. They went to the kitchen and Rudy told her about Jeff.

"This is just another one of those deals where you guys run around trying to get into disasters and then one really happens and you act like it's a big surprise," Diane said. "But it's no surprise—it's just stupid."

"Nobody was trying to get into any disaster," Rudy said.

"I can't believe you thought you could come over here in the middle of the night because of something you saw on a truck."

"Well, it was because of Jeff, too," Rudy said.

Finally, Diane got dressed and drove him back to Burger King in the Taurus. Her parents were angry because it was so late. Rudy really needed a ride home, but Diane's father wouldn't let her drive him that far.

"Listen," she said in the car, "I'm not that good-looking, O.K.? I know it, so you don't have to bring it up. You don't have to talk about beauty pageants. It's not a good joke because it's not funny. I sort of think you need a different kind of girlfriend. I'm sort of surprised we even go out, except you're not that much of a big shot, either."

"That's what's driving me nuts," Rudy said vehemently. He punched the roof of the car.

"You O.K.?" Diane asked after a minute. She turned into the lot and parked and began to fool with the Taurus's light switch. She looked at him, then twisted the dial to Off. Rudy was facing the other way. "Whenever I have a crisis it's not as big as the crisis you're having," she said.

"Your best friend didn't just blow his hands up," Rudy said. He seemed to be crying. Diane wasn't sure.

"I want to be able to impress people," he said. "I want to be the sort of person that impresses people. That's pretty stupid and everything, but that's what I want."

Diane tilted her head back and stared at the car ceiling.

"I feel like I'm going to do something crazy," Rudy went on. "I'm sort of a baseball player. I'm sort of this, sort of that. I get jealous of people who can really do stuff. He's a good pitcher. He wasn't even that bad at the hospital, and he was drugged up."

"What're you saying? You want to burn your fingers?"

"I'm sorry he was hurt. You should have seen it. It was amazing. It was like MTV or something. If that happened to me I'd be dead. If that happened to me I'd be screaming my head off."

"Is that true about him and the teacher? I heard about that."

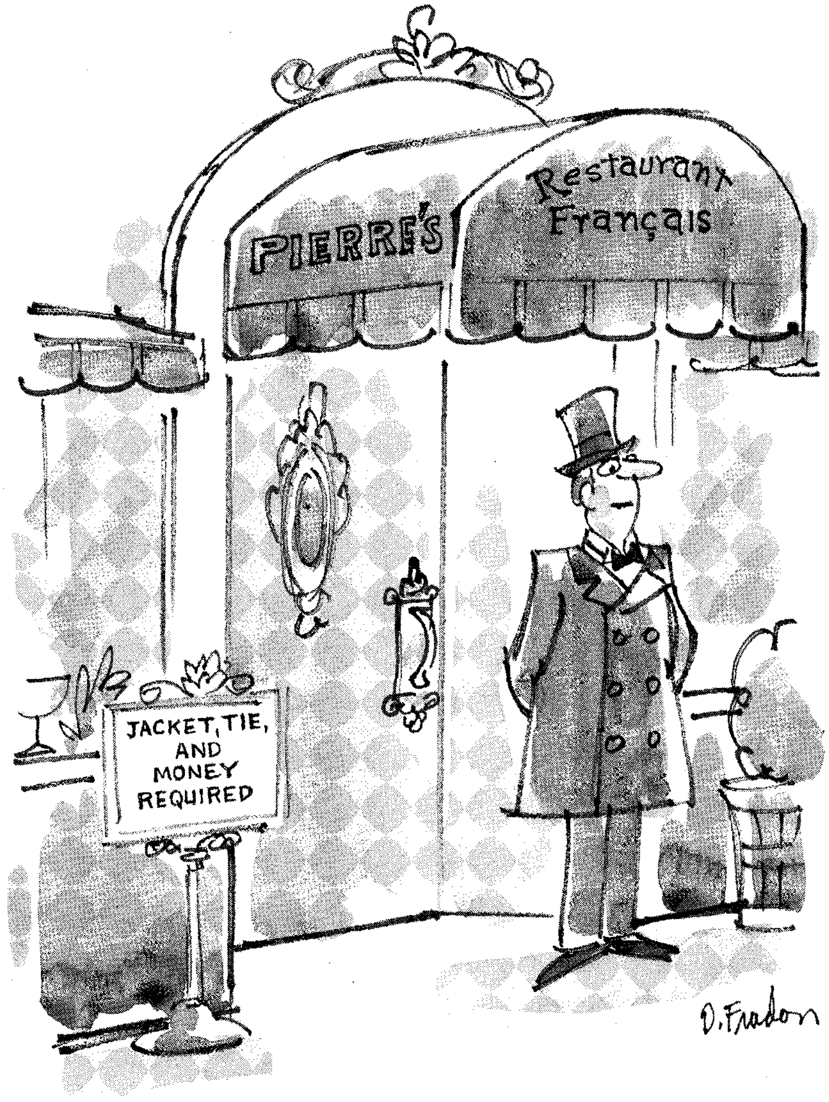
"Everything I'm telling you is the truth."

Diane was rotating the cone on the dash that controlled the windshield wipers. The keys were in her lap and the wipers weren't doing anything. Finally she said, "Well, maybe if you're such a chicken and such an average person that nobody admires you or anything, then maybe you won't have any disasters. You won't end up like Bacewicz or get mangled or anything. That's better than some people are doing around here." She sat up as if she'd solved a complicated mathematical problem. "What do you think of that?"

Rudy looked around. It was late; there were only a few lights on. He could see the peaked roofs and frazzled trees of his neighborhood below. The Blazers and Broncos and pickups would be parked down there, some in the driveways, some almost forming walls along the streets. Rudy's father usually sat up late watching television, but even he would be in bed by now. The parking lot was dotted with paper cups and hamburger cartons.

"Is that supposed to make me feel better?" Rudy said. "Because it's not."

—ALAN STERNBERG



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LETTERS WE NEVER FINISHED READING

SALEM HOUSE PUBLISHERS
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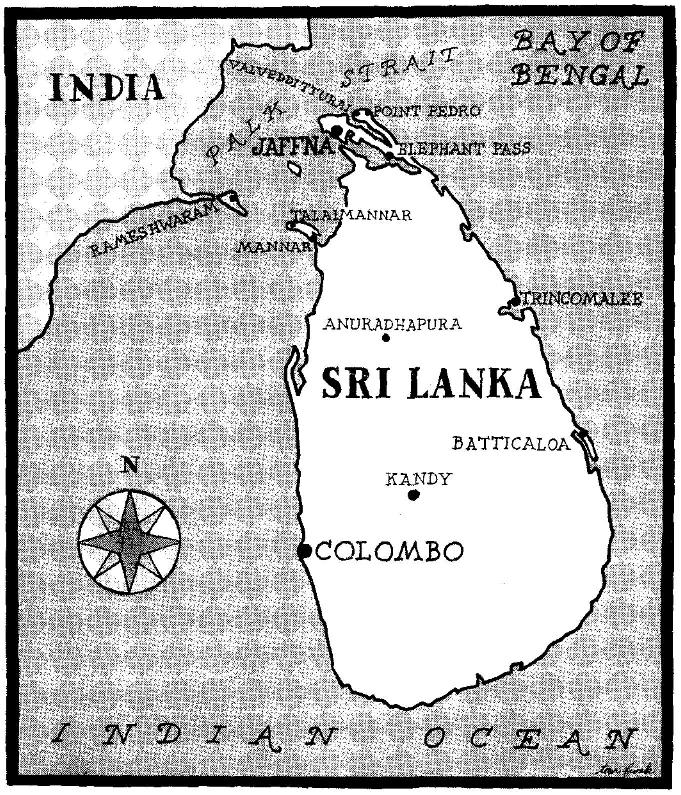
DEAR SINNER:

Perhaps you're wondering what I, God, am doing writing an autobiography.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE GODS AND THE STARS



MUCH of downtown Colombo, the seaport capital of Sri Lanka, resembles a birthday cake. There are pink sandstone buildings, ornate and cathedralesque, with Victorian arches and white parapets. Massive structures in Regency style blend in miraculously with austere statues of Queen Victoria and other relics of nineteenth-century Ceylon, which recall vast tea plantations, a beneficent British administration, and a Ceylonese aristocracy that flourished under the Raj. In March, which is the hot season, most of the city's million inhabitants, ignoring the oppressive heat, clog its tiny squares. On stately Galle Road, which has for a century served as a young people's promenade, slim young women, some in traditional saris, others wearing Western frocks, smile coquettishly at street-corner Johnnies. Young men whizzing by on Japanese motorbikes have long hair and wear faded jeans, in marked contrast to the colorful sarongs still favored by an older generation. Boutiques teem with shoppers, and although most of the hotels in the city are half empty, fashionable Western women bask at swimming pools beside the sea. Colombo has done little to erase its colonial past—as if it had sought safety in preserving an old-fashioned look. But the look is an illusion. Guards now check your parcels before you enter a boutique. Truckloads of commandos hurtle past the sunbathing women and people strolling on the manicured green. In Cinnamon Gardens, Colombo's most fashionable quarter, matronly women in pearls search their Fiats and their Mercedeses for hidden bombs. Only forty miles from the city, Army checkpoints—huge concrete blocks, battered oil drums, and railway ties bristling with steel nails—loom suddenly in the roadways. Weary soldiers manning them warn you to be off the roads by dark. Colombo is probably the safest place in Sri Lanka, but no place in Sri Lanka is really safe.

Until 1983, this lush teardrop of an island off the southern tip of India seemed to many observers almost perfect, a tropical paradise. Buttressed by a thriving free-market economy, it was one of the Third World's few democratic states, and had one of the Third World's highest literacy rates. It also had the world's second-oldest continuous written history, and it had been the subject of travellers' tales since the Chinese pilgrim Fa Hsien arrived in the fifth century. "Lanka" means "the resplendent" in Sinhalese, and, according to the Mahavamsa—the country's first epic, early history—as the Buddha lay dying he proclaimed, "In Lanka, O Lord of gods, will my religion be established." Enchanted Arab traders called the island Serendip, and the young Rudyard Kipling found on it "things wonderful and fascinating innumerable."

Yet beneath this surface Sri Lanka also carried the burden of a two-thousand-year history in which its population was divided into two hostile and mutually suspicious camps—those of the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority. The Sinhalese—the name means People of the Lion—were Indo-Aryans who arrived from northern India around 500 B.C. and established magnificent Buddhist kingdoms on the island's north-central plains. As Buddhism was supplanted by Hinduism in its Indian homeland, the Sinhalese came to view themselves as the protectors of the Buddhist faith. The Tamils were dark-skinned Dravidian Hindus from southern India, who arrived in smaller numbers a few hundred years later and established a rival kingdom on the island's Jaffna Peninsula, in the north, and on the eastern coast. Their symbol was the tiger, and at one period, during the tenth century, all of northern and much of central Sri Lanka was ruled by the Chola dynasty as a province of South India. A third, smaller ethnic group consisted of Muslim descendants of the Arab traders.

The Sinhalese and the Tamils fought off and on until the sixteenth century, when the island, divided and exhausted, was colonized by the Portuguese. They brought Catholicism, and were succeeded by the Dutch, who developed inland trade. The British arrived in 1795, and almost immediately set about uniting the island, which was now called Ceylon, and establishing one of the best of the British-colonial education systems. The country, with its tea, rubber, and coconut plantations, was prosperous and relatively quiescent, although there were muted charges by the Sinhalese that the British favored the Tamils and were following their customary expedient of "Divide and rule." In any event, the Tamils certainly thrived under the British, seizing the educational opportunities and embracing English as their tongue. Although they made up only eighteen per cent of the population, they did well in the Civil Service, and they tended to be better off economically than the Sinhalese. Under the British, there was no significant independence movement, and it could be said that Ceylon's independence, in 1948, came essentially on India's coattails.

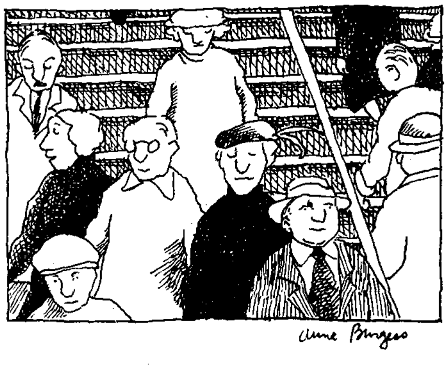
At that time, there was little hint of sectarian strife. The Sinhalese and the Tamils ruled jointly, the rulers being the élite of Ceylon's colonial "old boys" club. They had grown up playing cricket and rugby together, had shared membership in the fashionable clubs, had gone through university together. They appeared to consider themselves Ceylonese, not Tamils or Sinhalese.

Then, in 1956, a fervid nationalist government, led by the Sinhalese aristocrat S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, was swept into power, cushioned by an eclectic mixture of Buddhist monks and intellectuals, peasants, and unemployed youth. Although the Sinhalese have always been in the majority (today they make up seventy-four per cent of a population of sixteen million, and dominate the government and the Army), they, too, have long seen themselves as a threatened minority. The Sinhalese, as any Sinhalese will tell you, are the only Buddhist Sinhalese in the world; and even though their island has less than three million Tamils, there are fifty-five million more just ninety minutes away, in India. One of Bandaranaike's first acts as Prime Minister was to substitute Sinhalese for English as the island's official tongue. With that, an era of linguistic nationalism was triumphantly launched. The Tamils, who speak the Dravidian language of India's southern Tamil Nadu state, had been apprehensive before. Now they were alarmed. "That was when we went from the solution to the problem," a Harvard-educated Tamil, who was once a member of the island's parliament, has said.

Things got steadily worse. In 1971, new, government-sanctioned university-admission regulations had the effect of requiring Tamils to score higher than Sinhalese on entrance exams. With the central government and many businesses being conducted in Sinhalese, Tamils had already been under a distinct handicap when they competed with Sinhalese for jobs—and now Sinhalese politicians made it still more difficult for them to obtain new positions. Between 1956 and 1980, the Tamils' share of government jobs dropped from fifty per cent to eleven per cent.

As early as 1956, "language riots" had broken out in Colombo and other parts of the country, and they have occurred intermittently ever since. Over the years, voices began to be heard calling for autonomy in the heavily Tamil north. And in 1972 thirty teen-agers, led by a seventeen-year-old named Velupillai Prabakaran, proclaimed that their established politicians were no longer protecting their rights, and set up a guerrilla organization on the Jaffna Peninsula. They called it the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or L.T.T.E. ("Eelam" means "precious land.")

By 1977, when Junius Richard Jayewardene, a pro-American Sinhalese, became Sri Lanka's fifth Prime Minister, Tamil pressures for more autonomy were considerable. And Jayewardene's landslide victory (his United National Party won eighty-five per cent of the parliamentary seats) gave the Tamils a measure of hope, for he was considered far more moderate than his predecessors—especially Bandaranaike, who was assassinated in 1959, and his widow, Sirimavo, a Socialist, who succeeded him the following year. Most important, Jayewardene was not considered a Sinhalese chauvinist. Also, for the first time, a Tamil, Appapillai Amirthalingam, became leader of the opposition, and there now seemed reason to believe that ethnic grievances would be addressed.



The following year, Jayewardene rewrote the constitution to adopt a French-type Presidential system, and became President. He thereupon appointed a fiery nationalist named Ranasinghe Premadasa as the country's Prime Minister and moved swiftly to deal with the Tamil problem. He opened negotiations with the Tamil opposition on how power could be devolved, through either district or regional councils. The Tamils were represented by Amirthalingam's Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), a group of eighteen parliamentarians who had little in common with the Tamil militants in the north. Now they came under increasing pressure from the militants. At the same time, President Jayewardene was finding formidable foes in the Sinhalese nationalists in his government and party, and in the country's thirty thousand powerful Buddhist monks. One of Jayewardene's vulnerabilities, belying his considerable intelligence, was his persistence in looking at the Tamil situation as a terrorist problem rather than as a communal one. He dithered and vacillated. So did Amirthalingam. The negotiations turned into a series of lost opportunities, and outright mistakes. By the time I first visited Sri Lanka, in early 1983, this once idyllic island was already drifting toward chaos. I returned to the island several times a year, and on each occasion, however grim my expectations, I was startled anew by the deteri-

CEPPAGNA

The heights, fastnesses, are sharp and
wild: olive trees scatter into the open,
die out, and, beyond,
higher, dandelions sweeten

thin air: sheep go up where spring
grass winters into hay: there the
black bear runs and knows
a way old as rocks: the wolf, crisp

with practices, whirls, and the moon
burns his eyes: when the shepherd,
his third week, runs out of food, he is,
except for greens, out—homeless,

wineless, lampless, wifeless:
his eyes feed lean on
the liquor of stars, and just gravity
gets him back to earthly hungers.

—A. R. Ammons

• •

oration of the country's integrity as, bit by bit, paradise became irretrievable. The turning point came in July of 1983.

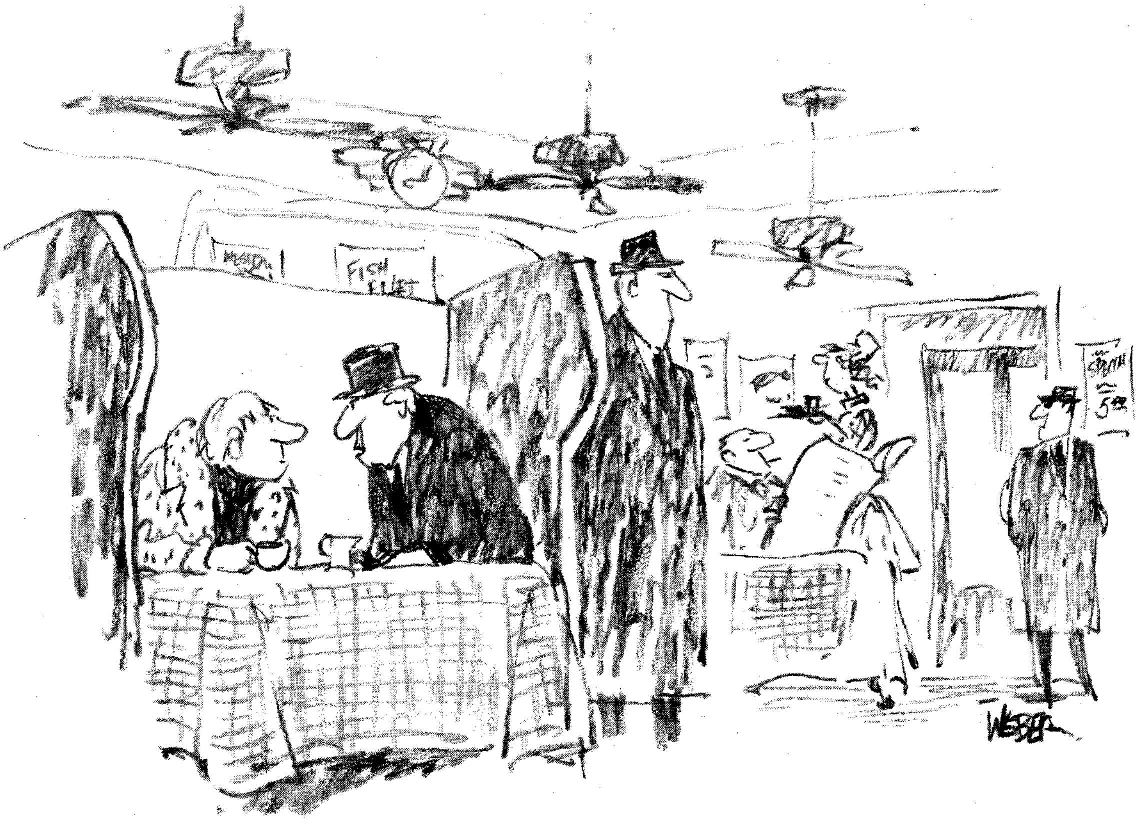
JOSEPH FARRIS

"Crocuses! It's spring!"

IT happened not in a typical ambush site—an isolated ravine, or a hairpin turn in the mountains—but in an upper-middle-class neighborhood on the outskirts of Jaffna, where Tamil homes were well appointed and adorned with gilded statues of Hinduism's sacred cows. Velupillai Prabakaran, who was now twenty-eight, carried out an attack on an Army convoy with thirteen other guerrillas, dressed in fatigues and armed with AK-47s and strings of grenades. He had been planning the attack for more than six weeks, and it was his most daring operation since he formed the Tamil Tigers. The guerrillas now numbered about five hundred and were weather-hardened and tough. They came from the fishing villages of the Jaffna Peninsula, such as Valvedditturai, where their forefathers had been smugglers and pirates, plying the waters of the Indian Ocean.

The Tigers had already launched sixty assaults in 1983, ranging from political assassinations and raids on banks to executions of suspected informers, who were shot and left hanging from Jaffna lampposts. The guerrillas had also become far more politically adept than the ragtag teen-age idealists of eleven years before. When they called for a boycott of municipal elections in the northern districts in May, 1983, as much as ninety-five per cent of the electorate stayed away in some areas.

Prabakaran, a handsome young man with flashing eyes, known to his friends as Thamby (Little Brother), was an impressively elusive leader—he had slipped past soldiers and police many times, once disguised as a peanut vender, another time as a priest—and, indeed, could have been mistaken for a rich, eccentric undergraduate. He was born in Valvedditturai, into the lowly Karaiar, or fishermen's, caste. (He eventually married into the higher Vellala caste.) At the age of four, he saw his uncle burned alive in the language riot of 1958. He has said that his childhood was lonely and that he was painfully shy, especially "in the matter of mingling with girls." He was a Boy Scout. His father was an educated government civil servant, employed as a district land officer in the Jaffna Peninsula. Prabakaran adored his father, and once told a journalist, "I was brought up in an environment of strict discipline. . . . My father set an example. . . . He would not even chew betel leaves. People say in our area: 'When he walks, he does not hurt even the grass under his feet.' " Prabakaran has also said, "I used to read books on the rise of Napoleon and his exploits. This kind of history held special appeal." In groping for an answer to a political question in recent years, he has often quoted from the Mahabharata, the ancient Indian epic of legendary battles and struggles between glorious kings. He had only a high-school education, however, having gone underground when he was seventeen. He is said to be an unerring marksman, who can hit a cigarette with a pistol shot at a hundred paces. (For inspiration, he likes to watch Clint Eastwood videocassettes.) He may have been trained in Cuba. He certainly modelled the Tigers on Fidel Castro's original guerrilla group, and from the start the L.T.T.E. has been a tightly controlled organization that has kept its strategy and movements secret through threat of public execution. It has also regularly shot up rivals from other Tamil militant groups. But Prabakaran is not a Marxist in the traditional sense. In fact, his political thinking seems a bit muddled, and the labels pinned on him have ranged from extreme rightist to extreme leftist. All that can be said for certain is that he is an extremely militant and angry Tamil nationalist. He and his men wear cyanide capsules around their necks as a special badge of membership and determination—and, of course, as



"I've got a little job for you, Kretchmer. I want you to infiltrate the I.R.S. and sow the seeds of compassion."

• •

a means of avoiding interrogation under arrest. He is a strict disciplinarian, who neither smokes nor drinks—he also does not drink coffee or tea—and is something of a puritan; he demanded celibacy and sobriety of his fighters in the movement's early days.

The story of how Prabakaran met his wife, Madivadani, is a tale often told in Sri Lanka. In 1984, a group of Tamil law and medical students at Jaffna University—Madivadani among them—went on a hunger strike, vowing to fast "unto death" to compel the government to address the problem of discrimination against Tamils. The prospect of these future Tamil leaders starving themselves to death so angered Prabakaran that he and a unit of his Tigers swept onto the campus, bundled the students into trucks, and took them to a hospital, where they were force-fed. One of Madivadani's friends, a fellow law student, who participated in the fast, has told me that Prabakaran shouted at his future wife, "We can't afford this idiotic self-sacrifice!" and informed her sternly that the first obligation of potential Tamil leaders of her generation was to stay alive to help the Tamil people.

The 1983 ambush in Jaffna, which killed thirteen government soldiers—Prabakaran is said to have killed nine of the men himself—unleashed an unprecedented wave of violence and a chain of events that changed the face of Sri Lanka. In retaliation, mobs of Sinhalese youths—who were almost certainly encouraged by some government ministers and officials—together with members of the security forces and political-party thugs, went on a five-day rampage of burning and slaughter that swept across the south of Sri Lanka into the east and the central plains. For the deaths of thirteen Sinhalese Buddhists, a thousand Hindu Tamils lost their lives. All over the island, Tamil homes, shops, and businesses were burned. Three hundred million dollars' worth of property damage was done in Colombo alone, where a third of the investments and businesses had been Tamil-owned. In all, a hundred thousand Tamils lost their homes.

ON August 1, 1983, nine days after the carnage began, I asked President Jayewardene, a Buddhist and a religious scholar, if he still believed in God.

He immediately replied, "Look around you. Does He exist here?"

We were in his drawing room in Colombo, but he was referring to the scene in the streets, where just a few days earlier temples were burning and markets and factories were being gutted. In the countryside, tea plantations were in flames.

"Buddhism is a non-violent religion," I said. "Isn't there any way all this hatred can be overcome?"

"All religions have a following in this country—Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam. If *they* haven't succeeded, I doubt very much whether I can. All human dreams evaporate one day."

The personal toll on him must have been enormous, I suggested. He was seventy-six, and his eyes looked tired. But, despite the dark circles, he still possessed the presence and bearing of one born into an affluent, cultured family.

He smiled. "Enormous? There must be a word that is larger. But manageable nonetheless. Yes, I was holding Sri Lanka up as a model to the world. And giving up now would be cowardice. I'm not a coward. I still believe in myself."

Jayewardene—he is called J.R. by his friends—is a Goigama, a member of Sri Lanka's highest Sinhalese caste. He is an extremely well-read man—one of the most literate of the Third World leaders. His father, a Supreme Court judge, was a Christian, and his mother was a Buddhist, and he had a classic British-colonial upbringing, including a Scottish governess. As a young man, he developed wide cultural interests, studied piano, and formed the habit of reading the London *Times*. He achieved considerable success at cricket, rugby, tennis, and boxing, and is still a cricket buff. Although he was baptized a Christian, he converted to Buddhism in his twenties.

Jayewardene has a genuine sense of historic mission and of his own historic destiny. In 1946, as a young lawyer and parliamentarian from Cey-

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THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IS DIVIDED.
SOME SAY THIS STUFF IS DANGEROUS, SOME SAY IT ISN'T.
Richter

lon, he stood before the world's leaders during the Peace Conference in San Francisco to plead for fair play for the defeated Japanese. At that time, too—despite an earlier flirtation with Marxism—he clashed repeatedly with Soviet generals and Kremlin bureaucrats, and by the time the Peace Conference came to an end he had solidly established his pro-Western credentials. A co-author of the Colombo Plan for Asian economic development, which was drawn up by Ceylon and Australia after the Second World War, he was an internationalist and a secularist. His faith was devout, yet for decades he had assiduously shunned Sri Lanka's militant Buddhist clergy.

Jayewardene was seventy when he became Prime Minister, in 1977, and, once in office, he was apparently determined to stay personally in charge—hence his changing of the constitution to become President. (When he pleases, he disdains the niceties of democratic politics.) In 1982, having been reëlected for another six years, he immediately froze the electoral cycle with a referendum delaying general elections and extending the mandate of his parliament for yet another six years (with the result that there have been no parliamentary elections for more than a decade).

I asked President Jayewardene how much time would be needed to rebuild what had been destroyed.

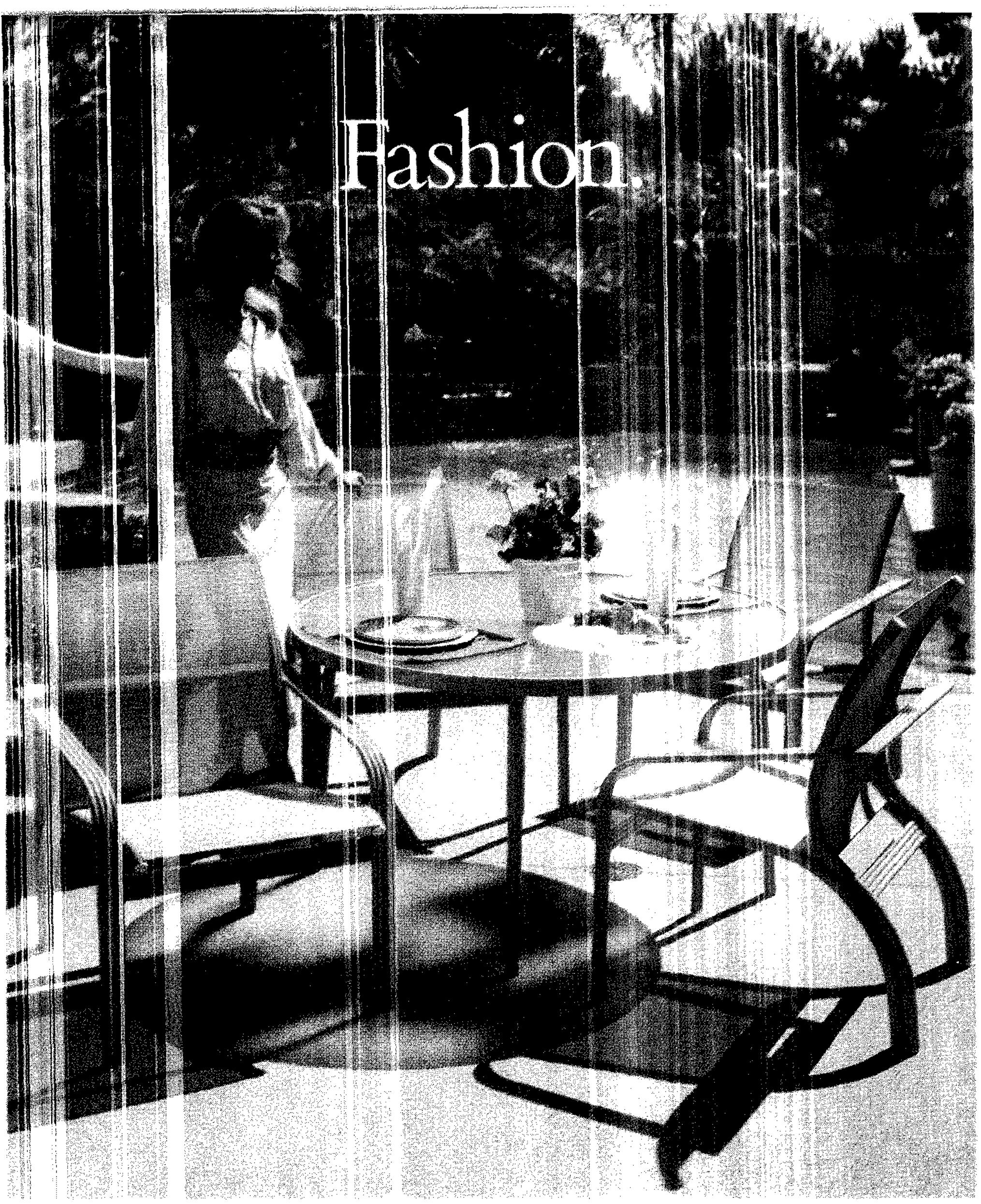
"It is impossible to measure," he said. "Physically, of course, we can rebuild. But minds, attitudes, friendships? I cannot speak of time."

Though the government had proclaimed a shoot-on-sight curfew during the July, 1983, violence, there was no visible military protection at the Presidential home, a comfortable, unpretentious two-hundred-year-old bungalow. Jayewardene has lived there since his marriage, in 1935. Ceremonial guards, in red-black-and-gold uniforms, stood smartly at attention, but none of them were armed, and only a handful of plainclothes security men were in the garden, lolling under stately eucalyptus trees. Yet several blocks away, in the Victorian city center, troops and sharpshooters lined the intersections and perched in trees. The once colorful Pettah Market, which had been the center of Colombo's wholesale food trade, was a charred ruin, with nearly all its shops destroyed. The nineteenth-century railway station had become a makeshift morgue, its white parapets discolored by fire and smoke. Nevertheless, President Jayewardene insisted that he would not seek a military solution to his nation's political strife.

The country's fate, it had become clear, rested for the moment in the hands of two men: Jayewardene and Prabakaran—the one a Buddhist, the other a Hindu. One, a member of Sri Lanka's highest caste, the Goigamas, who were destined to rule, had come of age in the best universities and the private British clubs. The other, born into the post-independence generation, and of the Karaiar caste, had come of age learning to reassemble a revolver blindfolded, in the remote Jaffna Peninsula. Both were austere, perhaps to a fault, in their personal lives. Both were unpredictable, mystifying their closest advisers by charting one course of action and abruptly changing their minds. Both believed in astrology, both were captives of myth. Both had become increasingly intransigent ethnic nationalists. If neither seemed strong enough to demolish the other, neither seemed weak enough to fall.

AFTER the 1983 riots, thousands of frightened young Tamils flocked to the guerrilla training camps, and in the Jaffna Peninsula there was a growing movement for a separate Tamil nation, to be called Tamil Eelam. The dynamics of history and geography, prejudice and fear had coalesced dangerously around religion, language, and race. An island the size of West Virginia, with only sixteen million people, had been divided by an invisible serpentine line. Beyond the sacred Buddhist city of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka's first capital, established in the center of the northern plain in the fourth century B.C.—citadel of the Vijaya dynasty, and home to ninety kings—a barrier now existed between the Tamil-dominated north and the Sinhalese south. Above that line, spreading to the isthmus of Elephant Pass and the Jaffna Peninsula beyond, the government's writ ended, and control was being consolidated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. For two and a half years, beginning in 1985, the Army units in Jaffna remained in their forts and base camps, under siege in their own country, as the Tigers swept out of the peninsula through the Northern Province and into the east.

In January, 1985, during a visit to the Northern Province, I was astonished at how much things had changed in only six months, largely because of the Sri Lankan Army's breakdown of discipline. On the road to the district capital of Mannar, the potholes grew steadily larger and more gaping. Houses and shops had been burned out in the villages. In one village, a hospital was recognizable only by its Red Cross, visible above black-



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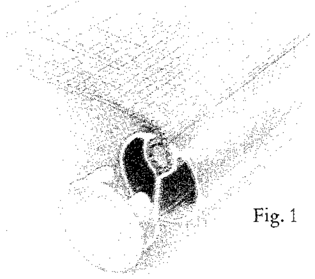

Fig. 1

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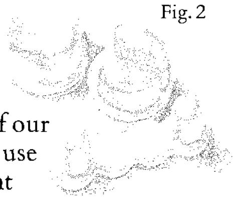

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ened walls. Arrogant but nervous government soldiers in battle fatigues brandished their automatic weapons, peering from sniper positions in the trees. Some carried the sophisticated AK-47s. No one knew where these weapons had come from. Rumor had it that they'd come from Pakistan—pilfered from a secret Afghanistan fund set up by the C.I.A.

"We are despised here," an Army commander, a soft-spoken graduate of the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, told me at his field headquarters, near Vavuniya. "We are an army of occupation, and just cannot cope with the situation. Every week, soldiers run amok. For the first time in all my years of service, I've literally had to slap men from the ranks, and I've had to lock up large numbers to prevent them from going on a rampage." Over twenty-five per cent of the Sri Lankan Army was then posted in the north—thirty-six hundred men—but was clearly unprepared to wage a war. The Army, which had been formed only after independence, was at its best at parades and cricket matches.

Mannar was just a small fishing village on an island connected by causeways to the Northern Peninsula. Government soldiers had attempted to seal it off. "They're all terrorists," a young corporal, referring to the villagers, told me at a roadblock outside Mannar. He was fidgeting with his rifle. I couldn't believe how young he was—barely old enough to shave. He popped his head in a back window of my car. "You may pass for one cigarette," he said.

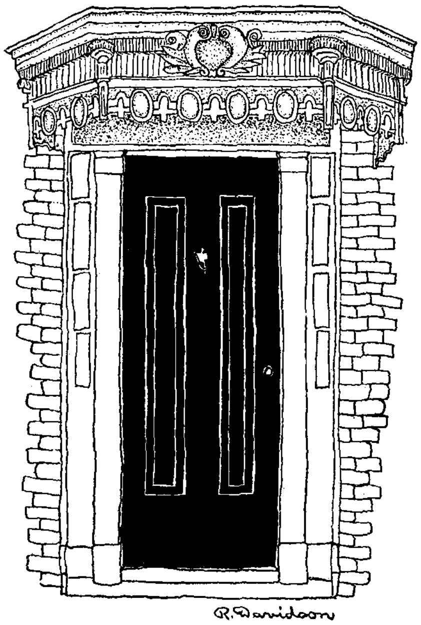
In Mannar, barricades and barbed-wire fences and burned-out oil drums had replaced the once colorful storefronts of the marketplace. In August, the Army had burned the market to the ground in retaliation for a Tiger strike against an Army convoy on a deserted road. No one could remember exactly where the Tiger strike had occurred, but it was more than thirty miles from Mannar.

In the dormitory of St. Xavier's, a secondary school—it had been established by Christian missionaries during the Raj—I spoke with Brother Hilary Joseph, a Tamil priest in his fifties. Of Mannar District's largely Tamil population of twenty thousand, seventy per cent were Catholics—a heritage of the Portuguese. With a bright-colored sarong wrapped in precise layers around his waist, and speaking Oxonian English, Brother Hilary was a product of an earlier age. He had gone through the British educational system, in which Tamils and Sinhalese alike were instructed in English. Since 1956, when the official language became Sinhalese, the language of school instruction had been Sinhalese or Tamil. It was the beginning of Sri Lanka's post-independence divide. The sons of Brother Hilary's generation, from both communities, no longer knew each other.

As vice-president of the Mannar Citizens' Committee—a panel monitoring human-rights abuses and Army atrocities—Brother Hilary, like a growing number of other Tamil priests, was being drawn increasingly into Sri Lanka's war. "I will tell you how things have changed," he said. "Everyone lives in dread here. No one sleeps at home. All the villagers sleep in the jungle. We sleep at the bishop's house. Two priests were killed in the last fortnight by the Army. It's a regular priest hunt."

He pulled out a diary, which had been squirrelled away in a filing cabinet, and for the next two hours he methodically recited events: the Army raid on Mannar's market; a curfew imposed on fishermen; eight employees of the Mulran post office lined up and shot dead; scores of peasants shot as they planted paddy in the villages of Mulran, Parapangandal, and Uyilaanlangum; an Army raid on the Holy Family Convent, with the nuns stripped of their wristwatches, gold crucifixes and chains.

One "retribution" had begun early on a December morning after a convoy of three Army jeeps hit a land mine, and the first jeep was blown away and a soldier killed. Thirty soldiers went on a six-hour rampage, and a hundred and fifty Tamil civilians were killed. At Talari Junction, the soldiers stopped a government-transport bus. The driver was a Muslim, the conductor a Sinhalese. The conductor told the soldiers, "If you're going to shoot the passengers, shoot me first." They shot him, and then shot thirty passengers. The wife of the village teacher in Parapangandal was breast-feeding her baby when the soldiers came. They killed her and, in a display of marksmanship, shot off the baby's toes. "It took three days just to transport the bodies," Brother Hilary said. "There is no longer any petrol, no longer any movement. Life is dying here."



(In Colombo, the response of the National Security Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali, to such atrocities was always the same: "They were all terrorists. No innocent civilians were killed.")

A young choirboy entered, his face flushed. Something had happened in Talaimannar, a fishing village at the western tip of Mannar Island, forty-five minutes away. The soldiers had come that morning. We decided to go there ourselves, travelling on rickshaw or on motorbike. We nearly collided with an Army tank.

For the last three miles, from Pesali to Talaimannar, we saw defoliation everywhere. Dense groves of twisted palmyra and coconut palms had been charred into black brittle. Over vast stretches, trees had been chopped to the ground. All cover was gone; only sand dunes remained. It was the government's answer to infiltration by the Tamil militants, whom everyone called "the boys." As we entered Talaimannar, a horrible smell rose from open sewers. Labyrinthine streets oozed mud. No one had been permitted to leave the village for two months, and we were the first outsiders who had been able to get through. We could see the coast of India, twenty-four miles across the Palk Strait.

"The soldiers took away eight youngsters this morning," an old fisherman said. He was tall and solemn, a local patriarch. "No reason. Perhaps they were looking for the boys." The parents of the youngsters didn't know where they were—they had joined "the disappeared."

"Fascists!" the old man shouted.

Two young women approached us, trying to sell bangles. They said their children had no food.

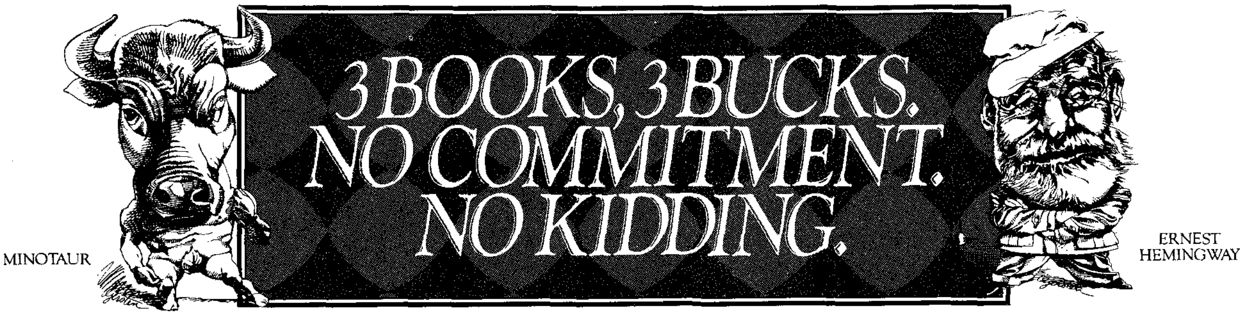
As we walked along the beach, the

old man shouted, "Siege! Siege! Siege!" On the horizon was an antiquated ex-American patrol boat flying the Sri Lankan flag; it was enforcing a naval zone of "surveillance." All of Talaimannar's two hundred and fifty fishing boats had been tied up for months. They littered the beach as far as the eye could see, their hulls painted yellow, red, and orange. They all flew small white flags. Talaimannar's livelihood had ended in November, 1984—as had that of twenty-five thousand fishermen—when the government, to stop infiltration from India, prohibited fishing off a wide swath of the north. "Fishing means boats. And boats mean terrorists," the old man said. There was spittle on his beard. "Simplicity. Stupid. And, I might tell you, the boys are still getting in."

BY the spring of 1987, the violence was clearly beyond control. Both Sinhalese and Tamils were predicting endless war. The almost inevitable failure of intermittent peace talks was accompanied by assaults and summary executions carried out by government military, paramilitary, and vigilante groups, and by fresh outrages by the Tamil militants. Nearly every day, innocent people were killed. More than six thousand people had died since Prabakaran's ambush in 1983. (Today, the figure has reached twelve to sixteen thousand, according to human-rights groups. As recently as March 5th, nineteen men, women, and children were killed by a terrorist mine in the Eastern Province.)

After the ambush, Prabakaran had left Sri Lanka and set up his headquarters in Madras, the capital of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, whose chief minister, the late M. G. Ramachandran, provided him and other Tamil separatists with sanctuary and bases, while the central government, in New Delhi, authorized their training by the Indian Intelligence agency RAW. It was said in India at the time that Indira Gandhi had approved the policy, to enhance her domestic political standing among the fifty-five million Tamils of Tamil Nadu. In any event, the policy constituted a safety valve to prevent a resurgence of separatist ambitions in Tamil Nadu itself. India had also become increasingly uneasy about Sri Lanka's links with what it perceived as two of its more interventionist neighbors, China and Pakistan. Before the Tamil insurgency, New Delhi's relations with Colombo had been formal and correct, but it had not had good relations with its other neighbors for years. By 1986, Prabakaran's Tigers and the other Tamil separatist groups had thirty-nine training camps in the swamps and jungles to the south of Madras. One consequence was that the rebel soldiers were far better trained and disciplined than the Sri Lankan Army was. Many of the guerrillas had Indian passports, and skipped across to Jaffna with ease; it was a ninety-minute ride by powerboat. The Sri Lankan "surveillance" had little effect, and about two hundred militants—Prabakaran himself sometimes among them—came and went each week.

When Rajiv Gandhi succeeded his mother, in 1984, India's Sri Lankan policy became even more pronounced, and Gandhi's critics began to compare India's support of Tamil separatists in Sri Lanka with alleged support by Pakistan of Sikh separatists in the Indian Punjab. In his early dealings with Jayewardene, Gandhi, who had had no experience in foreign affairs, relied heavily on personal contact, and often displayed an extraordinary naïveté about the complexities of Sri Lanka.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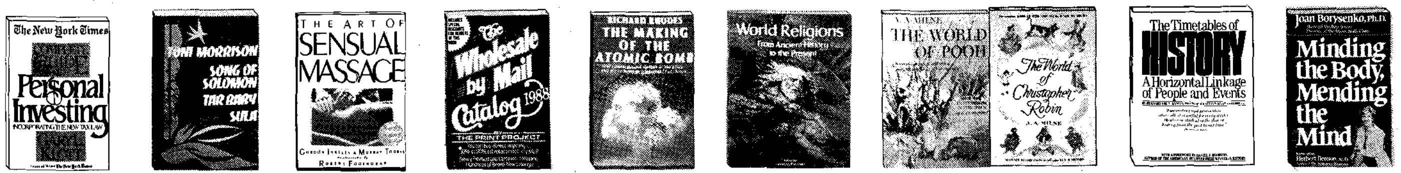

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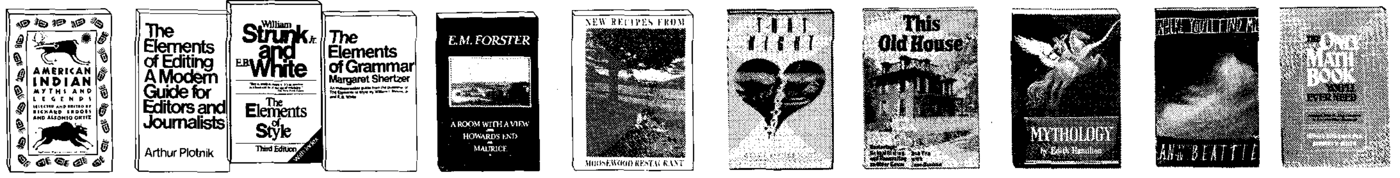

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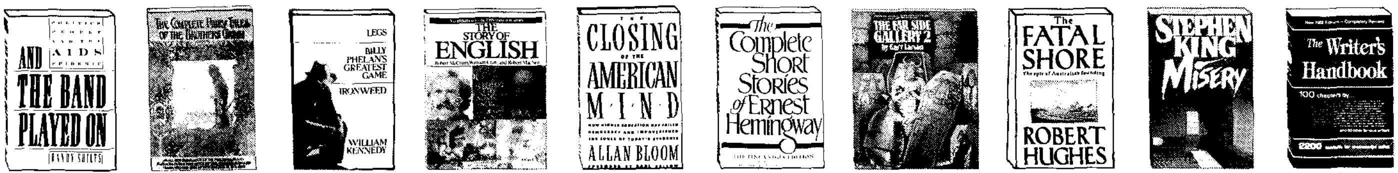
Then, in 1985—even though he was still arming the Tamil militants—he announced that he was opposed to a separatist Tamil state, and urged a compromise. He reached an agreement with Jayewardene on December 19, 1986, for a reasonable devolution of power, in which the Tamils would administer the Northern Province through a provincial council, with powers of land distribution, policing, and education firmly in their hands. The ethnically mixed Eastern Province—which the militants claimed as part of their traditional homeland—would be split into Tamil and Sinhalese areas. But Prabakaran refused to accept the agreement, reportedly telling Gandhi, "In serious politics, it won't do to concentrate on talking. You must go through actions and then you talk." He insisted on a merger of the north and the east, and, piqued by Gandhi's pressure, abruptly packed his bags and his .357 Magnum and returned to Jaffna in early January of 1987. Just before he left, an old friend of his father's who lives in Madras expressed concern about his going back. "Don't fret, Uncle," Prabakaran told him. "I have an uncanny hunch about impending military attacks and attempts to capture me." He laughed. "Besides that, the gods and the stars are looking after me."

In Jaffna, Prabakaran resumed his underground life, moving from town to town and village to village, often staying in one place for only a night. He lived surrounded by books on small-arms tactics and guerrilla warfare and by his Clint Eastwood videocassettes. He kept a pet leopard cub, named Sita, after the heroine of the Ramayana.

Last April, two terrorist acts brought matters to a head. On the seventeenth, a Friday, forty rebel gunmen surrounded three buses, two trucks, and a van on a lonely stretch of road a hundred and twenty miles northeast of Colombo. They separated the passengers into three groups—Sinhalese, Muslims, and Tamils. Most of the hundred and twenty-eight Sinhalese were unarmed members of the security forces and their children and wives who were returning from a Buddhist holiday. All of them were shot at point-blank range; the two other groups fled. The Good Friday Massacre, as it came to be called, was followed five days later by an explosion outside a bus station in Colombo's busy Pettah Market. It engulfed ten crowded buses in a huge fireball, and a hundred and thirteen people died. No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but President Jayewardene blamed the Tamil Tigers and another militant group, the Eelam Revolutionary Organization (EROS), which specializes in explosives and bombs.

When word of the Pettah bombing reached the President, he retired to his study, and he made no public appearances for several days. More and more, it was being said by the Presidents' friends that he appeared to lack the political will to push through a settlement. "He's not a very good leader at moments of crisis," one of his friends told me. "He thinks, he intellectualizes, he temporizes. He should simply act."

"At the time of Pettah, Jayewardene did nothing, he said nothing," a Western diplomat said to me last summer, with incredulity. "This was the worst disaster to befall Sri Lanka. It happened in the middle of Colombo, not in an unknown village in the north or east. Yet it was the Prime Minister, not the President, who visited the area, the hospitals, the morgue. That is characteristic of J.R. He waits. He sees the reaction of his



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ministers, of the country at large. He sits on the fence interminably, then comes down on the majority side. He's got away with this rather splendidly in the past, but I don't think he can do it much longer. It clearly shows a weak President."

As Jayewardene vacillated, new power in Colombo appeared to have devolved upon Jyotindra Nath Dixit, the Indian High Commissioner, a post equivalent to ambassador. He was an unflappable career diplomat who had been in Colombo for two years, after serving in Afghanistan. A portly, animated figure, always smoking a pipe, Dixit, who is known as Mani, was widely esteemed as a trouble-shooter and verbal fencer. Unobtrusively, he visited the bus station with two senior aides. He had the authority to make policy and was a powerful voice in charting Indo–Sri Lankan affairs, and he placed an urgent call to New Delhi that night to inform his government that the explosion signalled yet another escalation in Sri Lanka's war. Within twelve hours, six Sri Lankan Air Force planes had begun bombing suspected guerrilla targets in the Jaffna Peninsula.

A MONTH later, on May 26th, Jayewardene unleashed his military forces in major strength. The Sri Lankan Army launched Operation Liberation, to recapture the Jaffna Peninsula. It was a carefully prepared offensive, involving four thousand troops, helicopter gunships, amphibious landings, and aerial bombings. The attack had been planned in three stages: first, an assault on the Tigers' stronghold of Vadamarachchi, in the strategic salient of the peninsula's northeast; then a move westward, accompanied by a move up from the south; and, finally, an attack on the heavily defended Tiger stronghold of the city of Jaffna itself.

But after two weeks, at the end of Stage One, the offensive paused. It had already divided the Cabinet and the Army, and had prompted India to intervene—an action that was probably inevitable. In the middle of the Army's campaign, five Soviet-designed Indian Air Force AN-32 military transports, escorted by four Mirage jets, had air-dropped more than twenty-two tons of food and relief supplies to the Tamils. This move transformed New Delhi into an active participant in the four-year ethnic war. By flaunting its vastly superior air power as it violated the airspace of its small Indian Ocean neighbor, New Delhi had reaffirmed its role as the regional superpower, and the Tamils of Jaffna were certain that India would continue to aid them.

On the last morning of the offensive, I was flown to the north with a group of correspondents accompanying Cabinet members and some of the top Army brass on an Army-sponsored tour. As we passed over Vadamarachchi, now in government hands, the painfully slow advance of the Sri Lankan Army was clearly evident. We covered in minutes ground that had taken the Army days to win.

The offensive had cost an estimated five hundred lives—at least sixty-two soldiers, a hundred and thirty guerrillas, and upward of three hundred civilians. Villages had been looted or reduced to rubble, creating a new, floating population of a hundred thousand refugees. Below us, thick black smoke marked the burning of a rebel arms factory and fuel store. Blasts shook the ground at the airbase of Palaly, where rebel equipment was being destroyed. In what had been densely populated villages, there was no sign of life. If the villagers had returned to their houses, they were all hiding.

Though the area seemed remarkably small in proportion to the time involved in taking and securing it, General Cyril Ranatunge, the Joint Operations Commander, explained when we landed at Palaly that many houses had been booby-trapped and roads had been mined. "We were being very cautious, and very, very slow," he said.

A small man in his late fifties with a clipped mustache and Etonian ways, General Ranatunge was called out of retirement in August of 1985 by President Jayewardene to train the growing Sri Lankan Army—specifically, to instill a sense of discipline into a wildly undisciplined lot. From a largely ceremonial force of eleven thousand in 1983, the Army had more than doubled, to twenty-five thousand, in only four years, and the total strength of the security services had gone from thirty-three thousand to seventy-five thousand. Defense spending had increased seventeenfold since 1981, and in 1987 a staggering $500 million was being spent on Sri Lanka's war. Under General Ranatunge, leadership and training had improved dramatically, and though there were still many reports of excesses, there was no longer credible evidence of civilians being routinely massacred.

Back in the air, looking down at the parched villages, barren of irrigation, barren of industry, barren of jobs, I remembered what a young Tamil Tiger told me several years ago: "Ours, in a sense, is a generational as well as an ethnic and a religious revolt. We are fighting against a system that gives us no chance in the north."

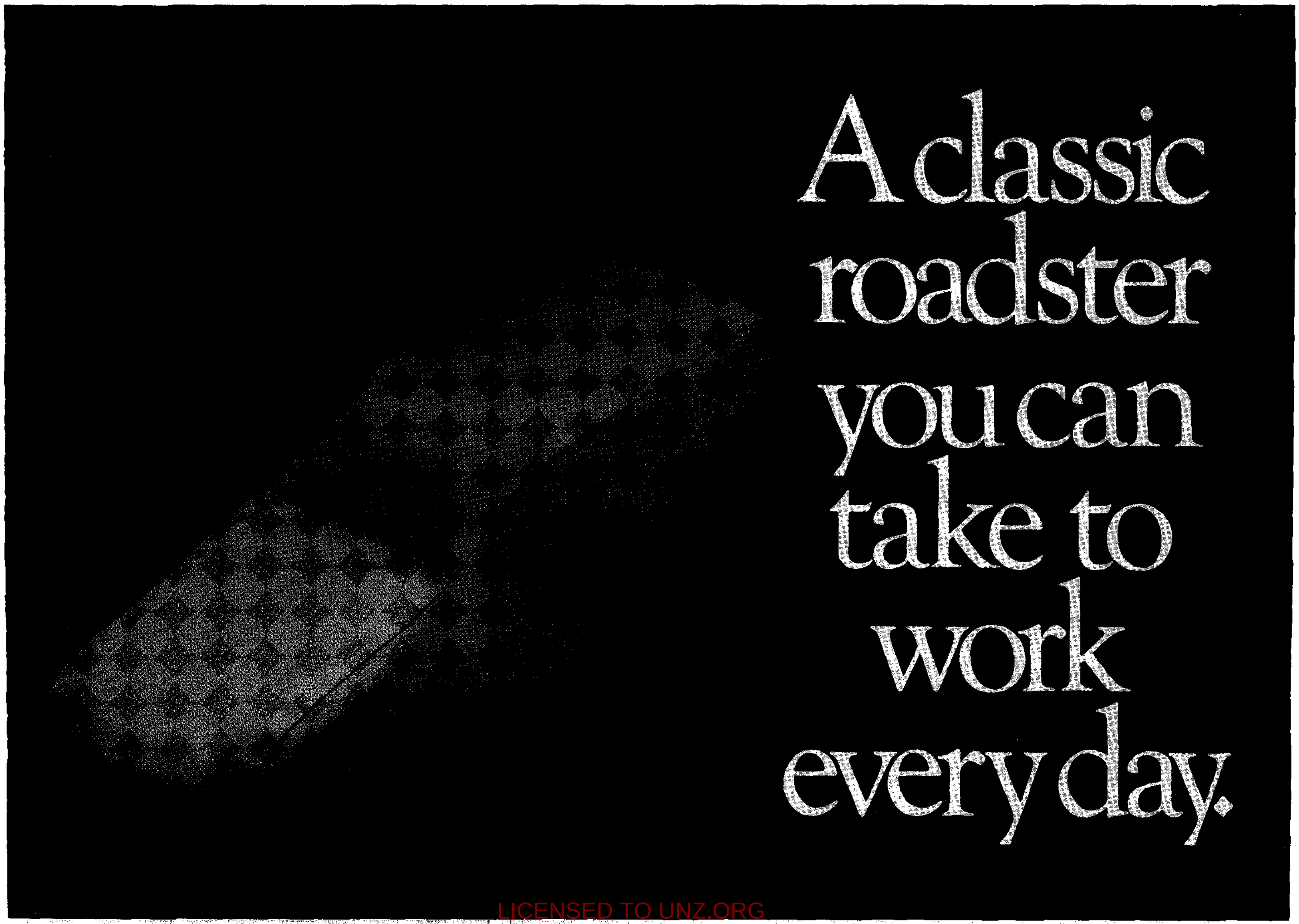
The scorched plains of the Jaffna Peninsula, dotted with spindly, dried-out palms, were the poorest area of Sri Lanka, but the per-capita gross national product was only $363 a year. Now the nation was spending $1.3 million a day on its ethnic war.

We touched down on a dusty field and disembarked—National Security Minister Athulathmudali, four other ministers, two generals, and the foreign journalists. The journalists were meant to confirm the government's assertion that Valvedditturai, the village on the Vadamarachchi Peninsula where Prabakaran was born, had not been carpet bombed during the offensive, as Prime Minister Gandhi had charged earlier. We were able to do so, yet also had to report that this once pretty town, with allées of coconut palms lending grace to its buildings, had been devastated by the fighting; row after row of buildings lay smashed beyond repair. We were also meant to see for ourselves that the people were not starving, as Gandhi, in justifying his airdrop, had claimed they were—and we saw no one who was.

Athulathmudali's role was to launch a "hearts, minds, and stomachs" campaign to win over the villagers, so they would help to prevent the area from falling back into the Tigers' hands. The villagers were not in a receptive mood. Upon capturing the village, nine days earlier, the Army had rounded up and removed all the men between fifteen and forty-five. Only women, children, and some old men remained. In all, four thousand men had been taken away from the Vadamarachchi Peninsula.

Athulathmudali, a Sinhalese who speaks Tamil, is a law graduate of Harvard and Oxford—he was president of the Oxford Union—and a carefully cultivated man. He had been chosen by President Jayewardene to save Sri Lanka from military collapse. I have heard him described as brilliant and cunning, as a patriot and a chauvinist, and as an egocentric and ambitious man. It was generally agreed that he was interested in becoming the next President of Sri Lanka. Protected by a tight knot of security officials, he smiled and talked in an urbane style as he made his way among the villagers. He gently held the hand of a distraught father whose sons had disappeared. He promised mothers, "We will do all that we can. Make your petition, and I promise that the innocent will be released with the least delay." Then he added, somewhat ominously, "There are the guilty, the not so guilty, and the innocent, and we have evolved what I believe is the best method of separating them." (By late July, a half to two-thirds of the detainees had been freed. In Colombo, I saw a young man from Valvedditturai. One of his little fingers had been cut off before he was released.)

Of the eight hundred thousand


A classic roadster you can take to work every day.

Tamils in the Jaffna Peninsula, many were not convinced that they had a future in Sri Lanka. At the ramshackle Point Pedro Base Hospital, in the village of Puloli, where we landed next, an angry young Tamil doctor, his face drawn and tired, was treating traumatized people for burns. He told me that "the desire for Tamil Eelam is stronger than ever before." He exclaimed, "Liberated? Hardly!" and went on, "People are frightened. They are scared for their property and scared for their lives. They have no defense against the Army; nobody can question the Army's acts. And the Sri Lanka Army has proved that it's little more than a band of riffraff terrorists. When the Tigers were here, people felt secure, and the Tigers will come back, you mark my words. They're waiting in the villages just beyond. They haven't been defeated. They have simply withdrawn."

What did he expect of India, I asked the doctor.

"They *should recognize Eelam and* liberate us," he said, "as they did in 1971, when India sent her Army into East Pakistan and created Bangladesh."

The hospital, I learned, was desperately short of doctors and nurses, blood plasma, and medical supplies. Seventy-five women and children and a hundred and twenty men, some moaning and crying, were then in the surgical ward. Many had been terribly burned on the first day of the Army's assault, when an Air Force plane dropped a barrel of gasoline—a primitive firebomb. It fell into a crowd of people who had fled the Aman Temple, in a village called Alway, when shooting occurred inside. No one believed that the dropping of the barrel had been an accident. Lying on one bed were a twenty-year-old mother and her two daughters, aged three and one. Third-degree burns covered their bodies, and much of their skin had been burned off. Gray, weblike matting covered one little girl's back. The smell of burned flesh was overwhelming.

As I left the hospital, seven women appeared from behind the trees and approached me. They were tall and handsome, and were dressed in starched, bright-colored saris, dazzling against the rubble and debris. They told me they were teachers from Point Pedro's J. Methodist High School, and had lost husbands or sons or nephews. Truckloads of soldiers swung by us, and the women looked alarmed but continued to tell me their stories. As they talked, we were gradually surrounded by a group of dazed, staring old men.

"Every house in Point Pedro lost two or three boys and girls," one of the women, a Miss E. I. Nalatambi, said. "Eighty per cent were educated —they were students, waiting to take their exams. Everyone from thirteen to fifty-three was taken. The soldiers even took away the physically handicapped—the deaf and dumb."

"My nephew was taken."

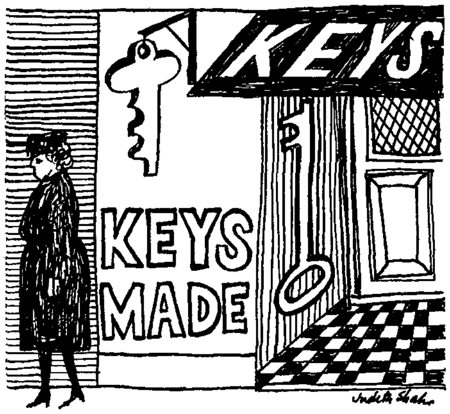
"So were my grandsons," an old woman cried, grasping my arm. "My grandsons, Madam, here are their identity cards."

Schoolboys in white shirts stared earnestly from the photographs.

The crowd had now grown considerably, and I was told that the Army's procedure had been the same in all the villages—Puloli, Point Pedro, Valvedditturai, and scores of others in the Vadamarachchi countryside.

"The *Army dropped leaflets* before dawn, warning us that the war would begin," an old man said. "They told us to go to the temple or to the schools. Eighteen places had been designated as safe havens." Those were not sufficient for Vadamarachchi's population, of a hundred and twenty thousand. "Many of us chose to remain in the bunkers with the Tigers. At least, we knew who they were." The old man, a retired surveyor, became increasingly agitated as he spoke. "Then came first light, and no further warning at all. The planes came in at five-forty-five in the morning, and for twelve hours they bombed and bombed."

BY the summer of 1987, the pressures on the Jayewardene government were immense. They came from a variety of sources: from the disgruntled lower ranks of the Army; from a now badly faltering economy, no longer propped up by a high world price for tea; from international public opinion and the powerful political voices of Washington and New Delhi. Also, Sinhalese anger was building.



After the April bombing of Pettah, the mood of the Sinhalese was "ugly and sour," a Western diplomat said. "They were angry over what they perceived as the regime's inability to tame the Tigers and protect the Sinhalese." The anger had infused new life into an outlawed Sinhalese Marxist group, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (J.V.P.), or People's Liberation Front. The Sinhalese equivalent of the Tamil Tigers, it had left a trail of blood when, in 1971, it staged a three-month armed insurrection in an effort to overthrow the Bandaranaike government. At least ten thousand people were killed by the security forces as they put the rebellion down. The J.V.P. then helped instigate the anti-Tamil mayhem in July of 1983. A cadre-based movement that has been compared with the Khmer Rouge, the J.V.P. and its leader, Rohana Wijeweera, who studied medicine in the nineteen-sixties at Moscow's Patrice Lumumba University, were now inciting Sinhalese nationalists in the south, preaching an anarchic mixture of chauvinism, Trotskyism, and nihilism. The J.V.P.'s strength had grown to an estimated two thousand hard-core members, according to a Sri Lankan Intelligence official. It welcomed deserters from the Sri Lankan Army into its ranks, and was believed to have cadres within the Army as well. (Last year, it raided five military arsenals, with inside help.)

With President Jayewardene's popularity at its lowest ebb in years, the former Socialist Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike had returned to the political scene, and Buddhist monks in saffron robes and carrying bamboo fans began shuffling barefoot through the streets of Colombo with loudspeakers, charging that the Jayewardene government had betrayed the Sinhalese. President Jayewardene's Cabinet was increasingly divided on how to deal with the war, and, following the Army's Vadamarachchi offensive, ministers began publicly parading their differences. Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa festooned his residence with Buddhist flags and went about the country, enrapturing audiences with tales of the first hero-king, Dutugemunu, and his epic fifteen-year campaign against the Tamils, which ended in 161 B.C. with the recapture of Anuradhapura.

The deteriorating situation was of particular concern to India and the United States. Either could have helped Colombo achieve a military solution—in New Delhi's case, by evicting the Tamil armies from their bases in India's south, or, in Washington's, by supplying Sri Lanka with a hundred million dollars in credits for military equipment and sophisticated arms—but both had refused to act.

Neither country had anything to gain from a prolonged guerrilla war. For India, it would almost certainly mean becoming even more embroiled. Rajiv Gandhi did not favor an independent Tamil Eelam. The precedent would be too dangerous, with the Sikhs in the Indian Punjab escalating their separatist campaign, and tribal warfare simmering in India's northeast. Yet the sensitivities and the crucially needed political support of India's fifty-five million Tamils meant that he could hardly be seen to push Sri Lanka's Tamil guerrillas out of Hindu India into the hands of an army of Buddhist Sinhalese. Washington's dilemma was only slightly less acute. Sri Lanka was the largest recipient in South Asia, in per-capita terms, of United States economic assistance (this despite a reduction from $75 million in 1984 to $33 million for the 1988 fiscal year). The Voice of America was about to establish one of its largest transmission centers outside the United States on this strategically placed island, where American warships made routine recreational stops. And, in an often hostile region, President Jayewardene had been a reliable American ally. Yet the United States did not wish to find itself portrayed as an arms supplier to a country bent on racial oppression, however much of an oversimplification that portrayal might be. Thus, a political settlement would let both Washington and New Delhi off the hook, and both countries continued to press for an agreement after the Army offensive in the north came to a halt.

General Nalin Seneviratne, the commander of the Sri Lankan Army, is a Sinhalese moderate. A highly regarded officer, he was commissioned in 1953 and trained at Sandhurst, at India's National Defense College, and at the United States Army Engineering School. From January, 1984, to February, 1985, he was the Jaffna area commander, besieged in the old Dutch fort. He had thrown the government in Colombo into an agitated state with a controversial memorandum, making it clear that a military solution to the warfare was impossible.

When I saw him last summer, in his office in Colombo, after the Vadamarachchi offensive, I reminded him of that conclusion.

"Well, the situation has certainly improved," he said. "But the Army is occupying the same area in the town of Jaffna as it was in 1984."

I asked him if the Army would attempt to take over the town.

"That's a decision for the politicians. The casualties would be immense. They would be four times the casualties of Operation Liberation. It would not only be hand-to-hand combat, door-to-door—it would be mousehole-to-mousehole. In Valvedditturai, the militants had made holes in the walls of houses. They'd removed tiles from the roofs. Everything possible was used to shoot at the soldiers. The taking of Jaffna would be at a very high cost. But we cannot control the

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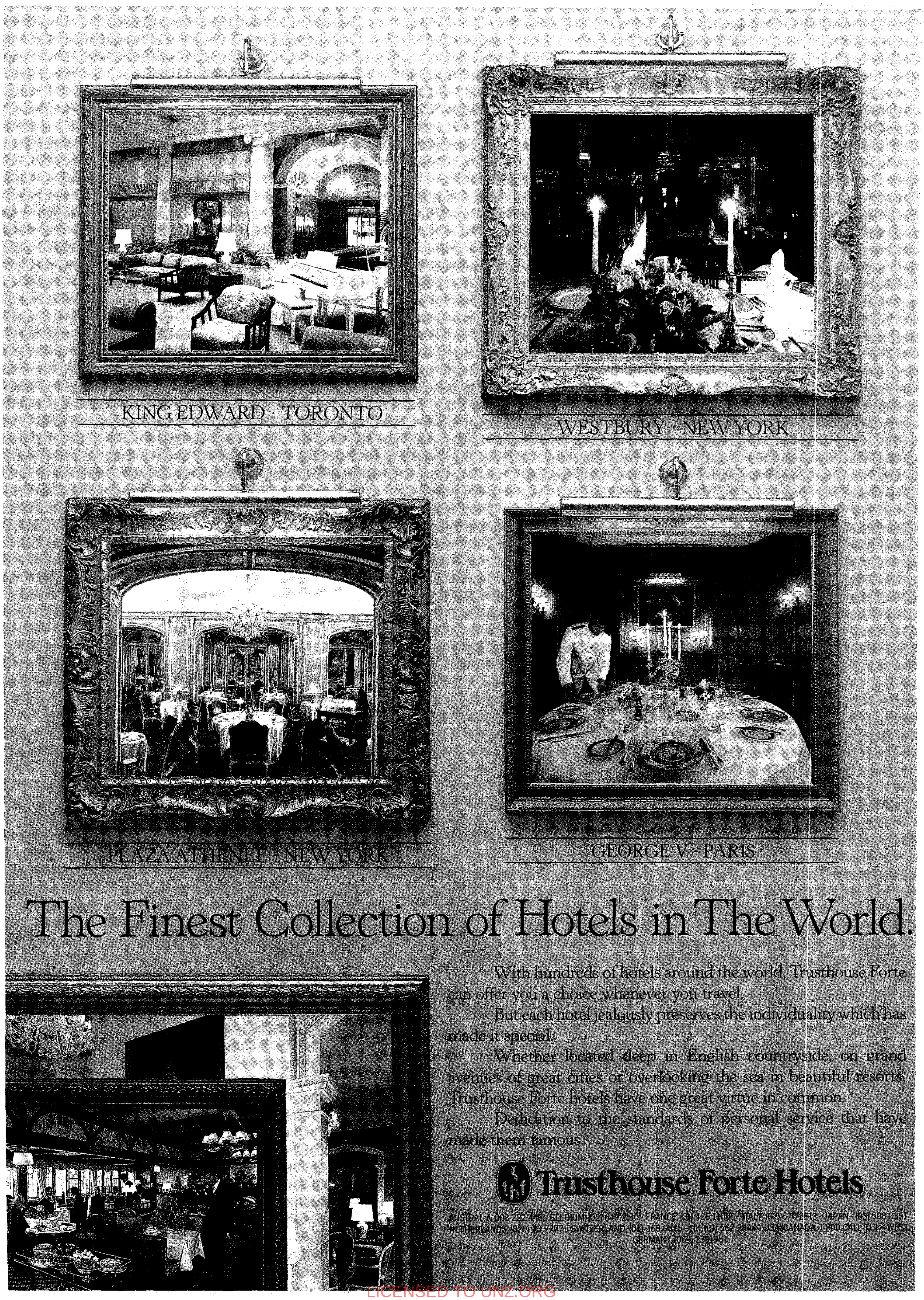

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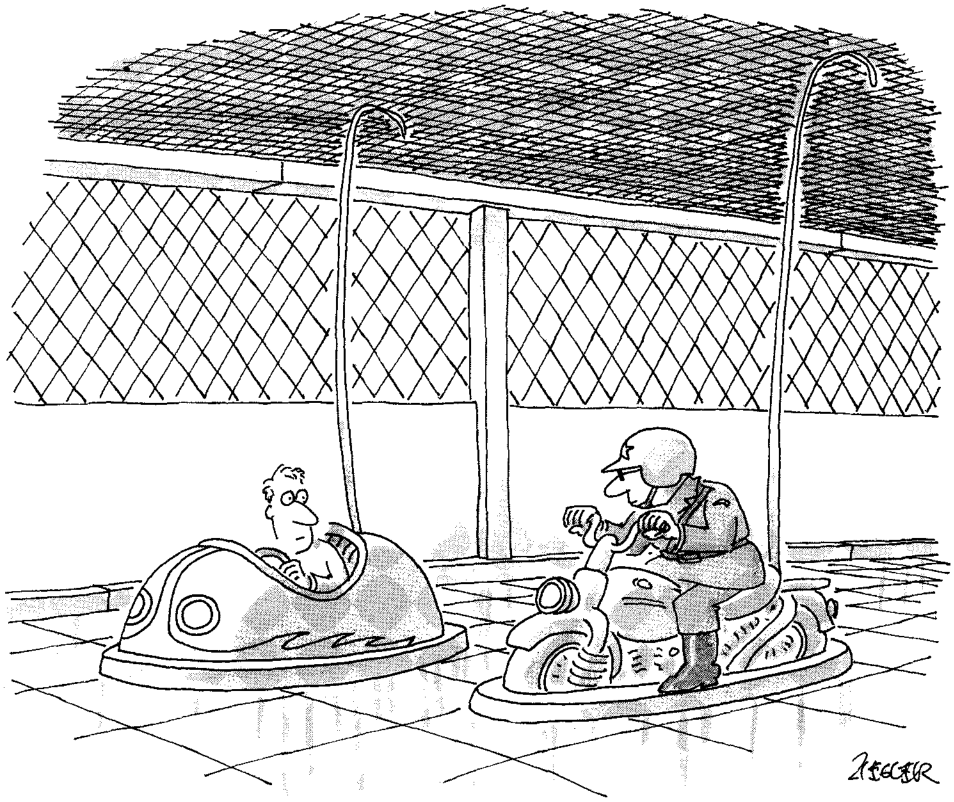

peninsula if we don't control the town."

"Am I correct in thinking that a 'Vietnam syndrome' has begun among Sri Lanka's generals, who now believe increasingly that they are fighting a political war?" I asked him.

He smiled. "Are you implying that the politicians don't know what they're doing? I coördinate very closely with the National Security Minister. We don't get the impression that the politicians don't know what they're about." He went on to say that there had to be a political solution to Sri Lanka's war.

Neelan Tiruchelvam, a highly respected, Harvard-trained Tamil lawyer, author, and former member of parliament, had been a negotiator in six years of talks on granting some form of autonomy to the Tamils. But after the anti-Tamil carnage of July, 1983, the government required all Tamil members of parliament to take a loyalty oath, swearing that they opposed even peaceful efforts toward separatism in the north. The sixteen members from the Tamil United Liberation Front refused and were expelled from the parliament. Neelan Tiruchelvam was one of the few expelled TULF members of parliament who were still in Colombo (Appapillai Amirthalingam, the TULF leader, had fled to Madras) and, aided by his wife, Sithie—also a lawyer—was now the chief spokesman for the Tamil moderates in Sri Lanka. I met with Mr. Tiruchelvam in Colombo in June. His eyes were lively and, despite the pressures of the war, still conveyed a smile. "By driving us out of the political arena, the government made the people feel they had no effective democratic alternative," he told me.

It was a bad blunder. Not only did it force the Tamil movement underground, thereby handing it over to the militants, but when the government wanted to reopen negotiations there was no one to negotiate with. Prabakaran, despite nudges from India from time to time, had simply refused to come to the table unless an ever-growing list of preconditions was met. Only a very brave or a very foolish Sinhalese politician could agree to such largesse. "It is now time to negotiate," Rajiv Gandhi is said to have told Prabakaran in November, 1986. "You can do it from a position of strength. Go to the table and we'll make you chief minister of Jaffna."

"I'm already chief minister of Jaffna," Prabakaran replied.

In April of 1987, after the Sri Lankan Air Force pounded suspected guerrilla camps, Prabakaran went to New Delhi and again met with Gandhi.

"Perhaps it's time to talk," Gandhi is reported to have said.

"I can't," Prabakaran is said to have answered. "I'm too weak."

I asked Mr. Tiruchelvam what the consequences would be of the Army's drive in the Vadamarachchi Peninsula.

"They risked a great deal," he said. "Not only did they further antagonize the civilian population—the sheer humiliation of old people being asked to run, then being shot at for no reason at all—but, even more important from the Sinhalese side, they compromised the integrity of Sri Lanka by provoking the Indian airlift. India's active involvement will make it far more difficult for the Jayewardene government to sell any agreement to the Sinhalese. The airdrop was meant to convey a message that was double-edged. Rajiv was saying to the government, 'If you're going to continue military aggression against the Tamils, we are clearly on their side.' The second message was to the Tamils in the north and east, and it was 'You have to look to India for your ultimate defense, not to the Tamil Tigers in the region now.' "

Mr. Tiruchelvam is an indefatigable worker, who keeps copious files on the government's violations of human rights, and, as the father of two teenage sons, he is concerned that an entire generation of young men has been lost. "The young rank and file of the militants have been five years without education now," he said. "The same is true of the soldiers. And there is intoxication in the power of a gun. Village life and family life are being ripped apart. We are a very small country, yet at least fifty-four hundred Tamils are in jail, many of them brutally tortured; hundreds of others are missing; and at least six thousand people have died. Every town, every village, every hamlet in the north and east has been intimately affected by this war."

A. C. S. Hameed, Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister, is a courtly Muslim who favors safari suits. He sits in an elegant, teak-panelled office, dwarfed by an enormous desk, and always has a cigar at hand. He and the Finance Minister, Ronnie de Mel, and the Lands Minister, Gamini Dissanayake, were the most outspoken

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moderates in the Sri Lankan Cabinet last summer. They opposed the Vadamarachchi offensive, and were concerned about President Jayewardene's increasingly authoritarian ways. They were also unsettled by the country's growing disregard for human rights. Hameed has urged the President to disband the country's brutal paramilitary force, the Home Guards. He is not only a humanitarian but a Muslim, and Muslim villages have been attacked.

I met with the Foreign Minister not long after the Indian airdrop, and he was very troubled by it. "The airdrop can't be considered lightly," he said. "Whether you intervene militarily or without a full military machine, the violation of sovereignty and territorial integrity is the same. We were given a demarche of thirty-five minutes that the planes were on the way. What added insult to injury was that we were told that any resistance would be met with force. You just don't conduct bilateral relations like that—not a country like India. Nobody should have to teach India the tenets of diplomacy."

Hameed had been Foreign Minister since President Jayewardene came to power, and had seen Indo-Sri Lankan relations rise and fall like a seesaw. I asked him if there was any way that relations between the two countries could improve if India continued its active support of the Tamil militants.

"We have lived with it for nearly four years, and we have no effective ways of preventing it. In Tamil Nadu, the terrorists constitute a state within a state. They could not function as effectively as they have without state patronage."

"Is Rajiv Gandhi able to control the Tigers, or have they gone beyond his reach?"

"We have seen firm evidence that India has control. When an American couple were kidnapped in Jaffna in 1984, India did a bit of arm-twisting and the Americans were released."

The Minister declined to say what Sri Lanka expected from the United States, but one of his aides told me that the government was disappointed that Washington had not put more pressure on New Delhi to expel the militants. All that Hameed would say of the superpowers during the interview was "We have neither the blessings nor the destabilizing influence of either of them."

When I asked the Minister if the Muslims felt threatened by the war, he urged me to visit the Eastern Province and see for myself.

WE set out from my hotel in Colombo in a car filled with picnic baskets, bottled water, and plastic bags. My driver, Raja, who was one of only three Colombo drivers still willing to travel to the east, had warned, "The water is fetid. There will be no food at the hotel." A Sinhalese friend of mine named Nirmala de Mel—an anthropologist who runs a travel agency—was coming with me, and Raja had lectured us so sternly that we looked as though we were going off to war.

As we skirted the Central Province, I was reminded of a 1985 trip through the Central Highlands and its tranquil tea estates. They were still colonial, though the British had long since left; they were also the home of "the other Tamils," separated by history, politics, and caste from those fighting for statehood. These Tamils were low-caste Indian Tamils—many of them Untouchables whom the British had brought to Sri Lanka in the nineteenth century to work the tea plantations. They had come as bonded laborers, and now their descendants numbered nearly a million (five and a half per cent of the population) and lived peacefully in the Central Highlands and the south. It was the Ceylon Tamils, the highest-caste Brahmans and the Vellalas—who had been in Sri Lanka for more than two thousand years, heirs of proud Tamil kingdoms—who were now fighting for an independent homeland.

On that 1985 trip, I had watched young women plucking tea, their golden nose rings and forehead markings identifying them as Indian Tamils, not Ceylonese. Most of them were "stateless," caught in the ebb and flow of the ambivalency of Indo-Sri Lankan relations. Of all Sri Lanka's ethnic communities, the Indian Tamils were the most heavily exploited and the most widely ignored.

Several years before, a young Tamil militant had tried to explain to me that the Indian Tamils, who lived under ghastly conditions, simply weren't worth fighting for. "Is it caste?" I asked him. "Aren't the Indian Tamils' circumstances just as inequitable as those of the Tamils in the north?" He seemed somewhat embarrassed by my questions, as he should have been. He was a graduate of the London School of Economics, and a Marxist at that.

I saw him again last summer, in

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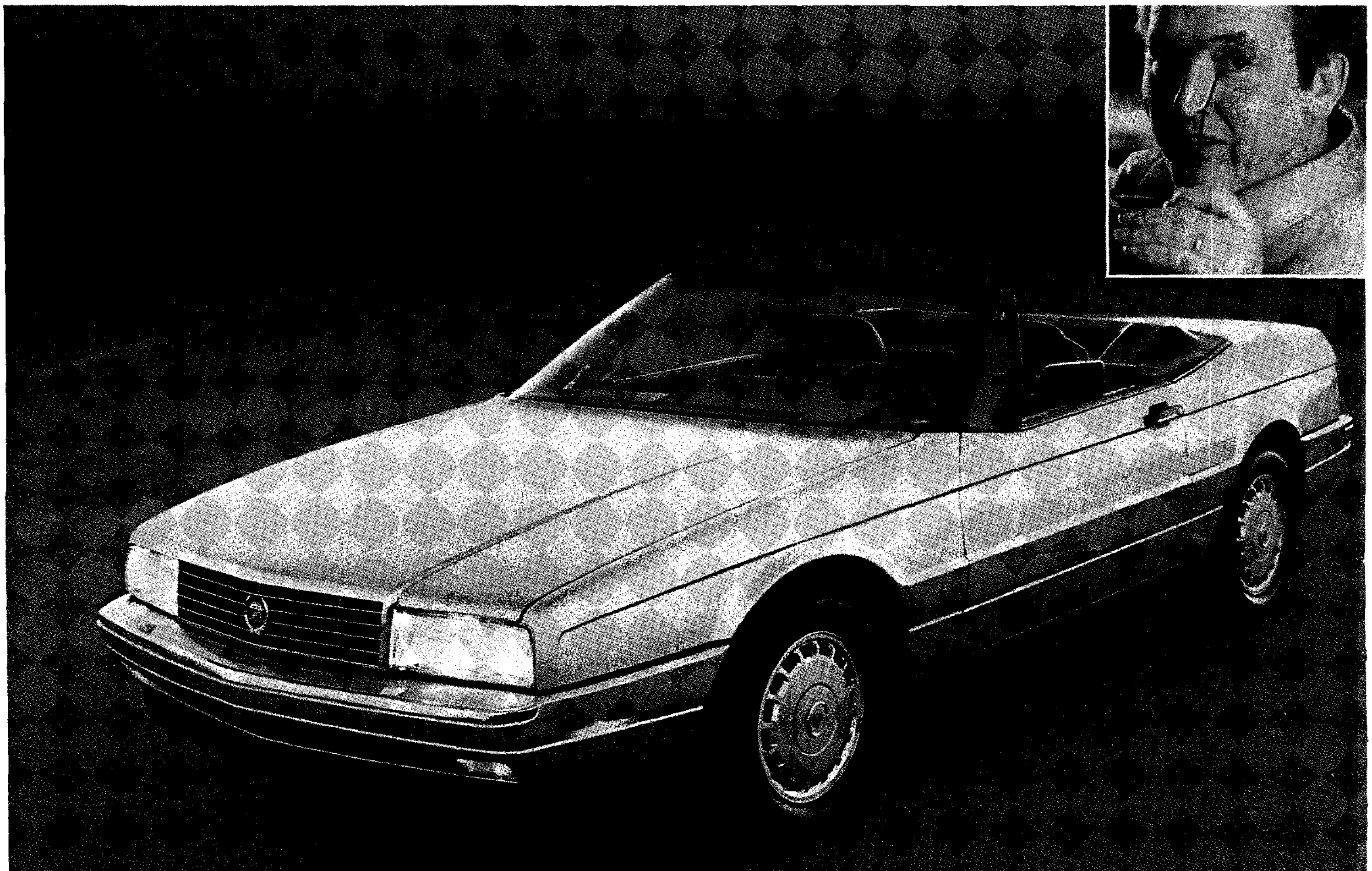

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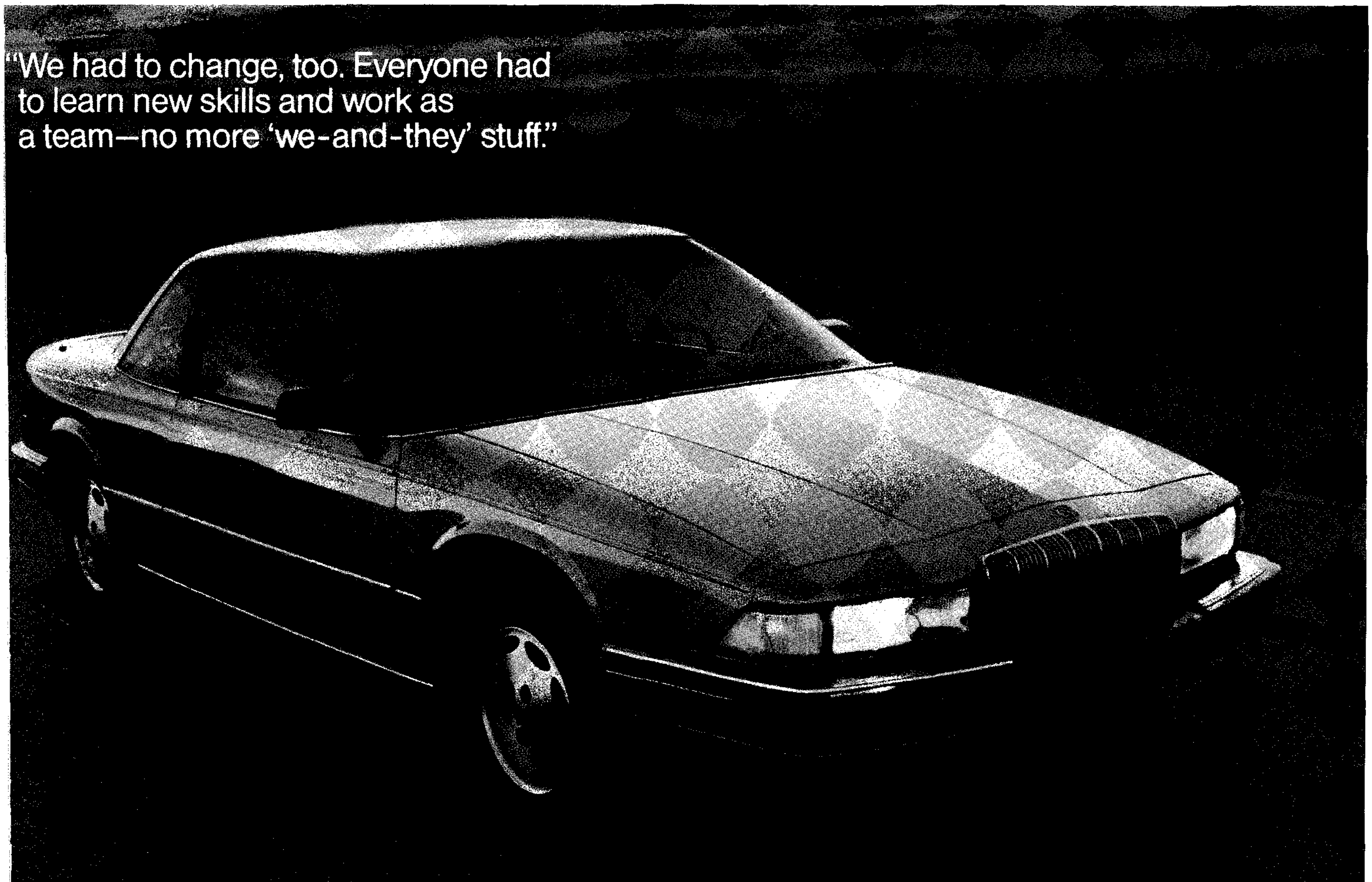

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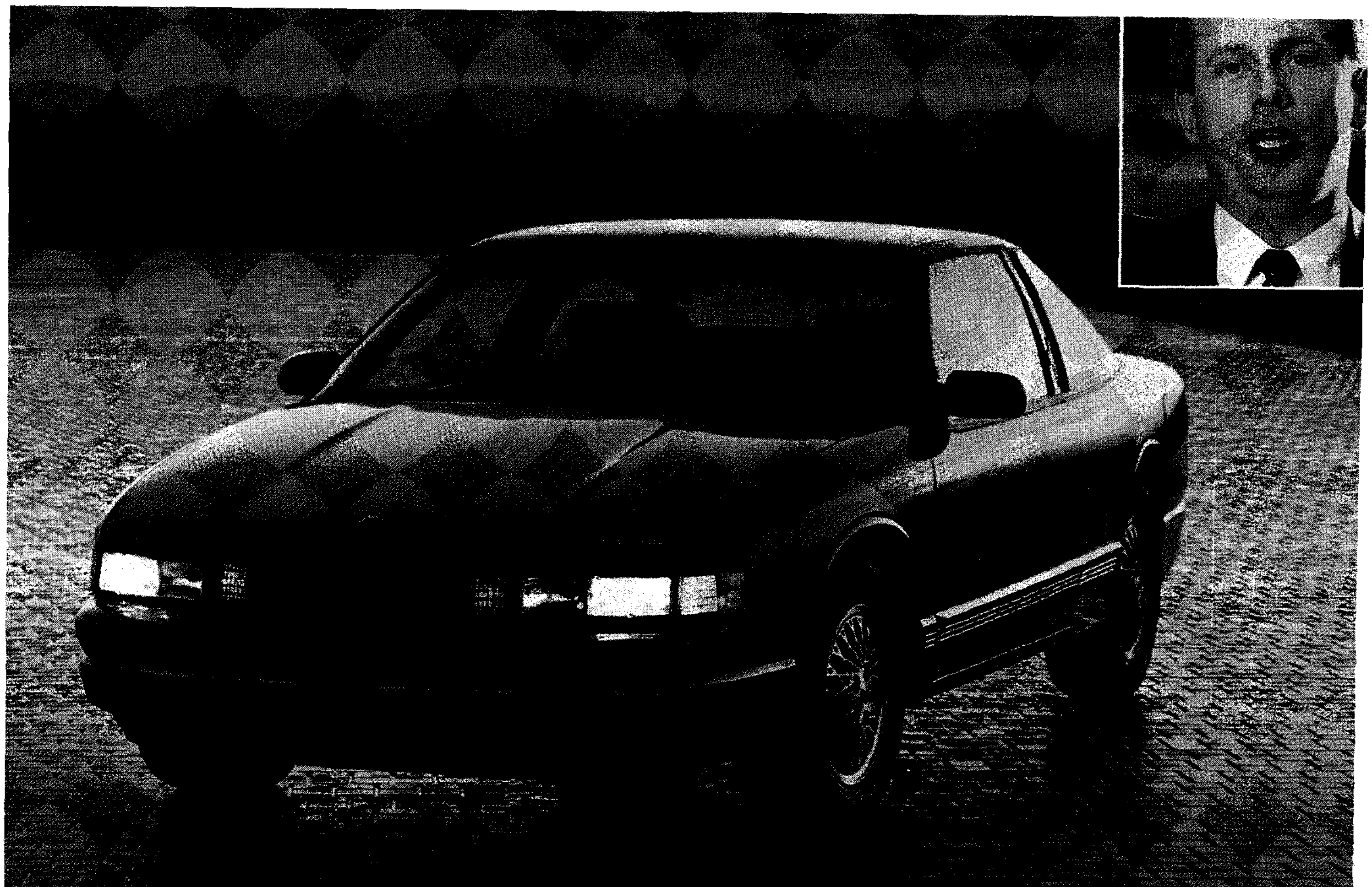

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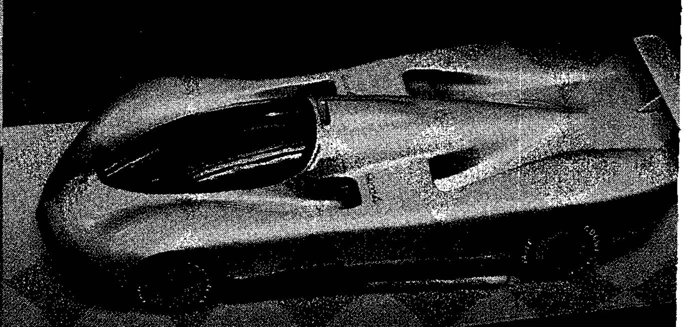

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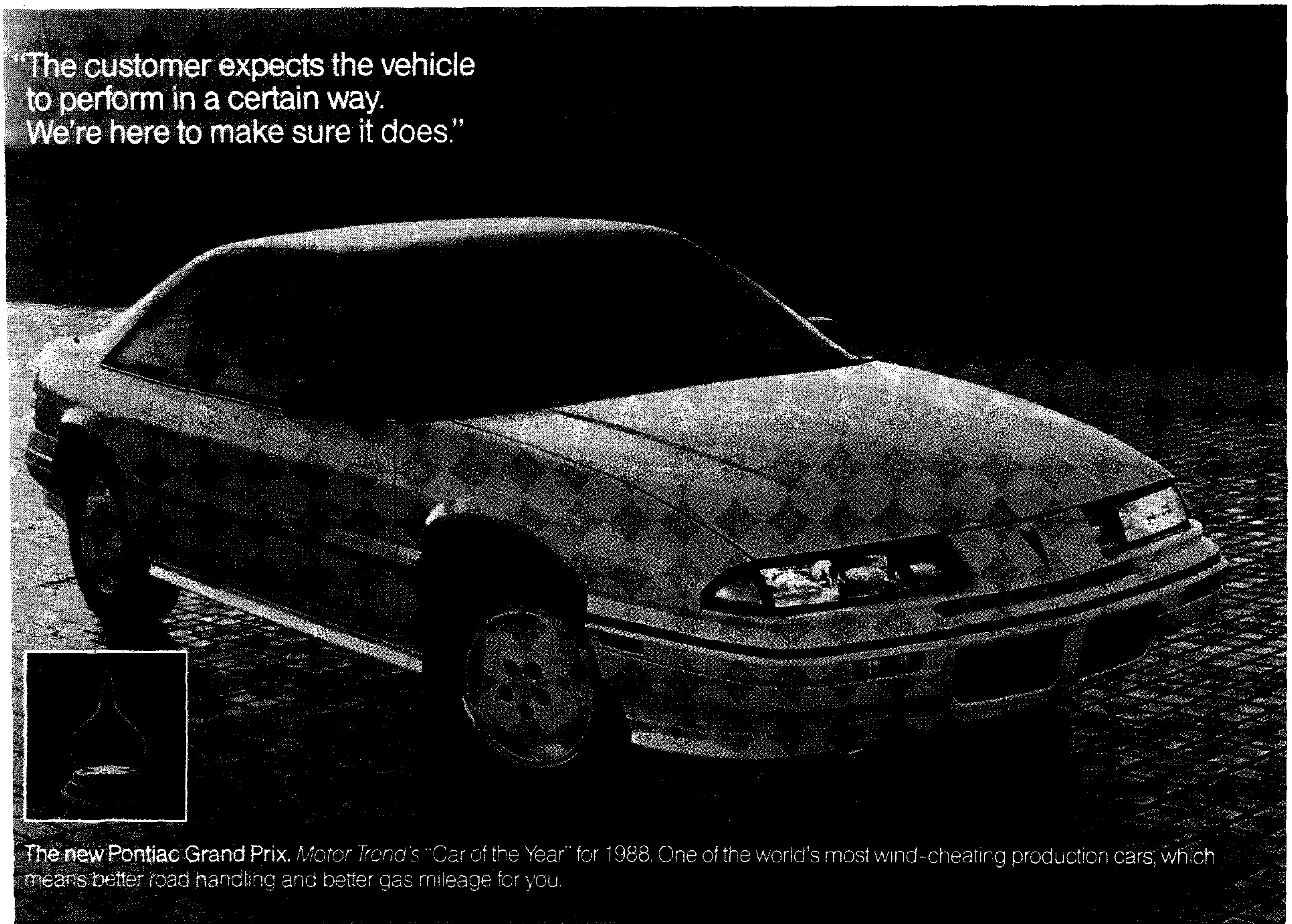

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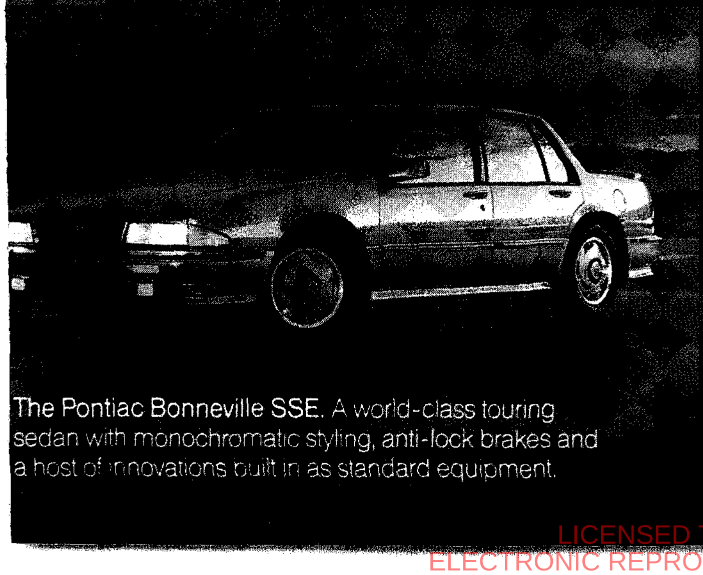

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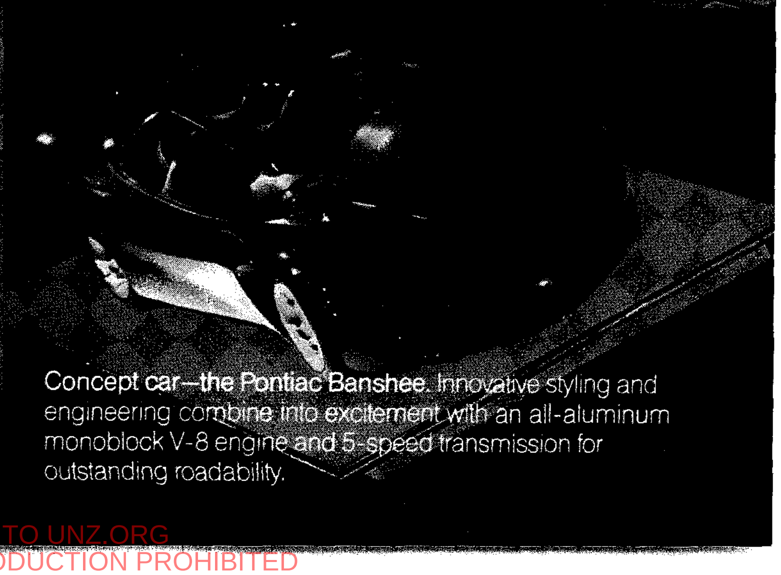

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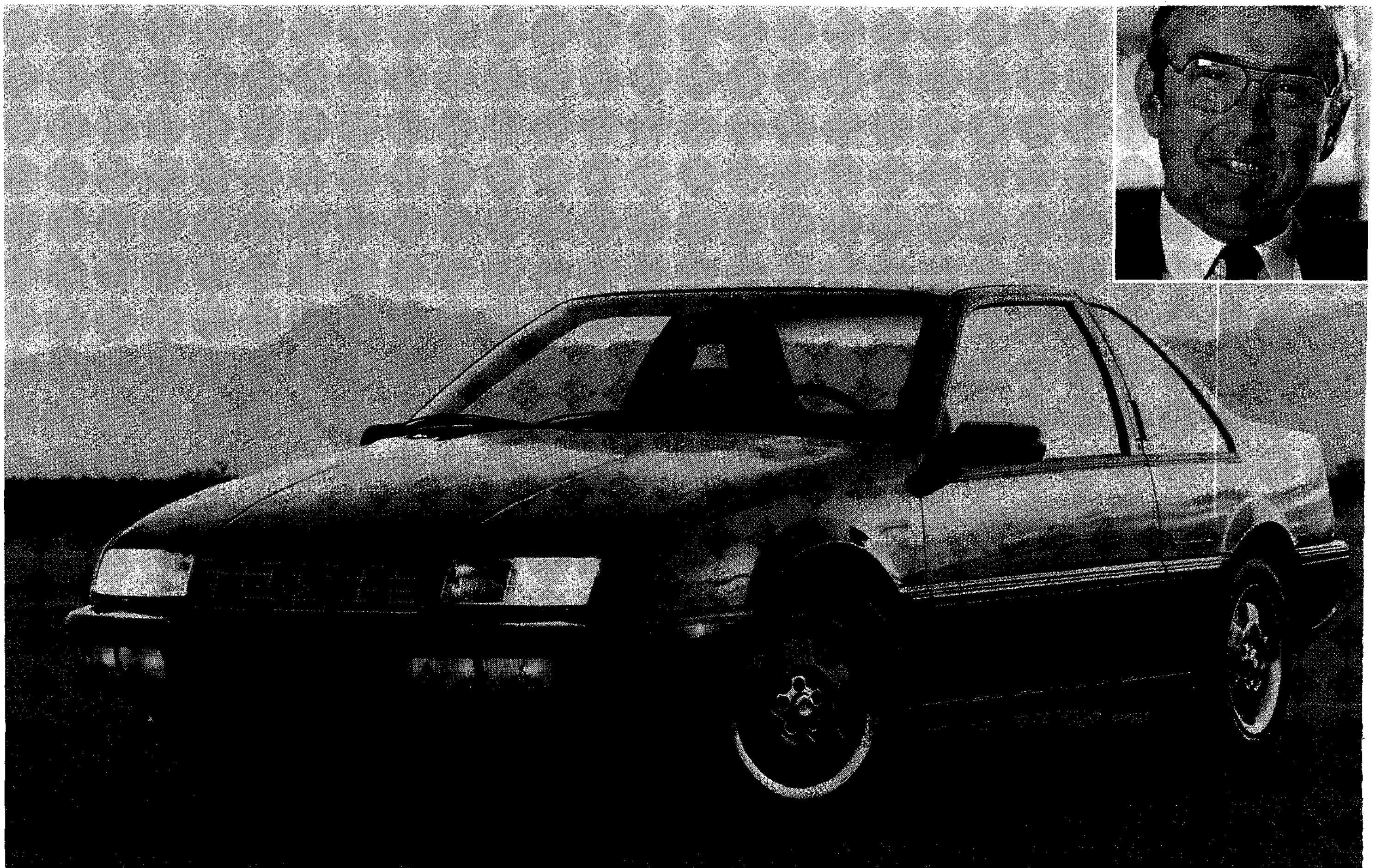

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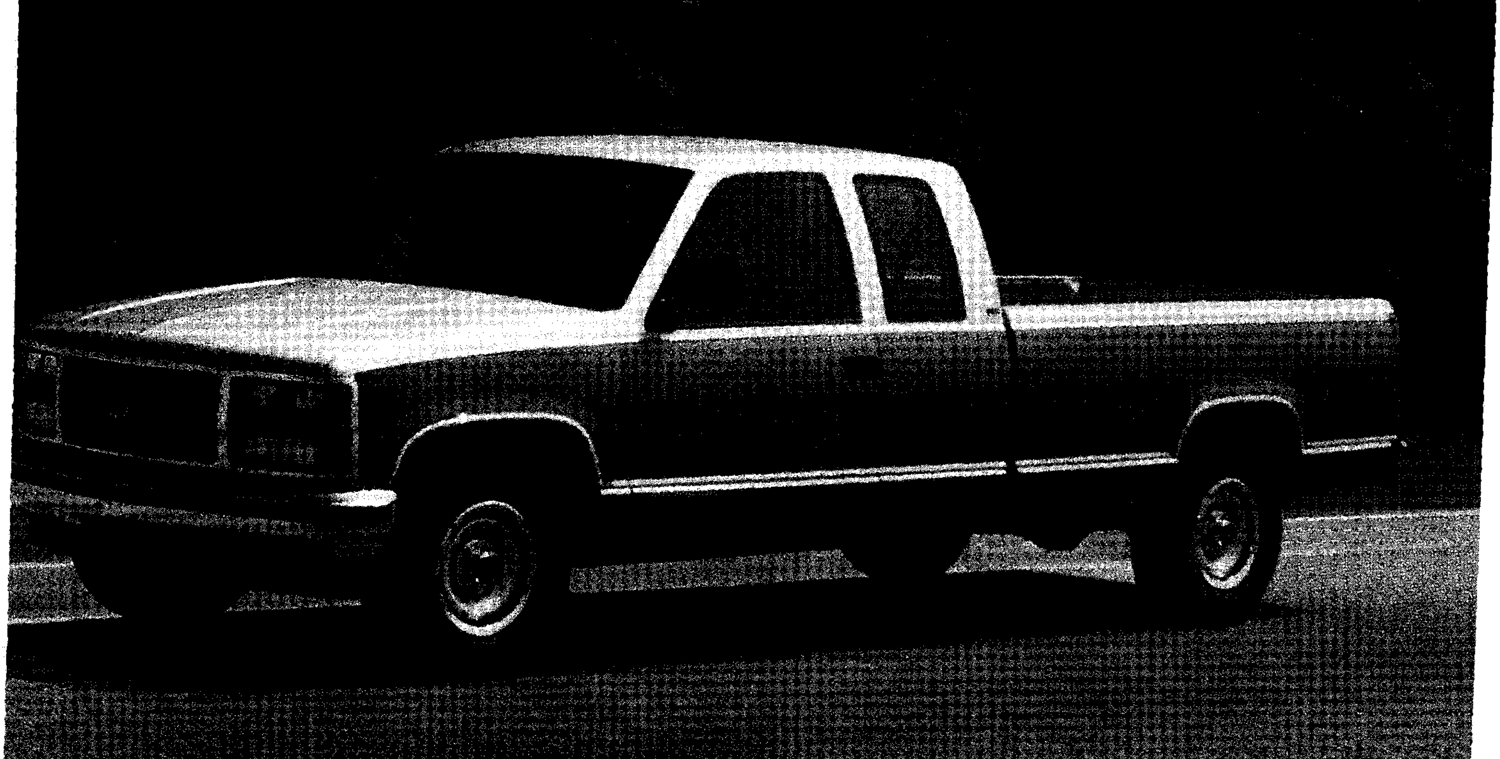

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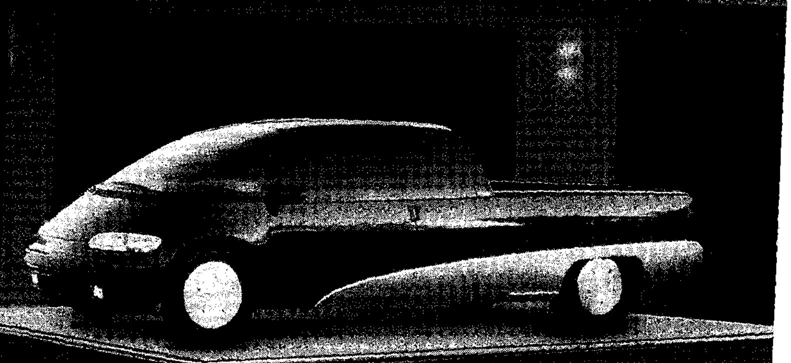

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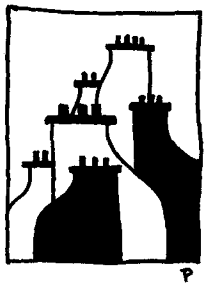
Madras. Now approaching middle age, he had laid down his arms. But he had a new project: he was bringing the “revolution of the proletariat” to the lofty hill estates, recruiting young Indian Tamils who, he said, were being “exploited.”

Three of the five major Tamil separatist organizations—excluding the Tamil Tigers—were working in the tea estates today, but it was the high-caste Vellalas who were recruiting the Untouchables, not members of Prabakaran's lower Karaiar caste. Both Indian Tamils and Muslims were now, for the first time, beginning to ask themselves who they were, and debating which side they owed their allegiance to. With whom did they identify—the Tamils or the Sinhalese?



Once Nirmala, Raja, and I had crossed the border into the Eastern Province, we came upon signs of war. In every village, mourning flags flew from stucco or dung houses, from mosques and temples—a sea of green, white, yellow, and black. Farther south, in Batticaloa, we were told, no one went out at night, and the young men who had not fled the area never went out at all.

The Eastern Province had a unique form of terror, provoked by a controversial plan for depopulating Tamil villages there and resettling them with Sinhalese. This so-called West Bank scheme envisaged sending two hundred thousand armed Sinhalese, trained in self-defense, to Tamil-dominated northern and eastern districts, where they would be settled on government-owned land. The program was launched in 1984, and a vital part of it was the Home Guard militia. Fashioned by National Security Minister Athulathmudali, the force now numbered some twenty thousand men. (Thousands of settlers had arrived in the Eastern Province since 1984, and in a number of bloody encounters Tamil guerrillas had driven them off the land.)

Finally, we reached the magnificent port of Trincomalee. In 1775, Lord Nelson called it the finest natural harbor in the world. Today, it stood in faded splendor, bruised and divided, for Trincomalee was Sri Lanka's most sensitive city, and the Eastern Province was the most sensitive and most vulnerable of the country's nine provinces. Its population was forty-two per cent Tamil, thirty-three per cent Muslim, and twenty-five per cent Sinhalese—Sri Lanka's most intricately woven provincial tapestry.

Every effort toward a peace settlement had faltered on the question of the east. The Tamil militants claimed it as part of their traditional homeland, and saw Trincomalee as their natural capital city, to be developed into a commercial center rivalling Hong Kong. But the Jayewardene government, well aware of the strategic and commercial importance of the port—it was the headquarters of the Sri Lankan Navy and a center for containership trade—was determined not to allow it to fall into Tamil hands.

“So in the Eastern Province we have the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, the police and the Home Guards, the Special Task Force, and just ordinary thugs. In Jaffna, they at least have only the Army—only one enemy to face,” Mrs. Subashini Varathan, the secretary of Trincomalee's Citizens' Committee, explained to me in the book-lined study of her home. The committee, a panel of distinguished doctors, lawyers, economists, and priests, had documented evidence of fifty-two Tamil villages in the Trincomalee District which had been totally or partly destroyed. The Army was pitted against the Tamil militants; paramilitary forces attacked civilians at will; every ethnic community was hostile to every other. “You must be prepared to die even when you take the bus,” Mrs. Varathan said.

Refugees, mostly Tamil and Muslim but with a sprinkling of Sinhalese (their number increased dramatically before the end of the year), were camped helter-skelter outside Trincomalee. They traded accusations, and by night many turned into vigilantes and staged retaliatory raids.

The ethnic divide was so great that neighbors no longer spoke. The luxurious beach hotels were empty, and industry had collapsed. Residents and journalists alike constantly mentioned Beirut. “Like Beirut, we have lost a whole generation,” a committee member told me. “The wounds will never heal.”

One of the more fearsome groups in the Eastern Province is the Special Task Force (S.T.F.), a paramilitary force of hardened storm troopers trained by British mercenaries. It is controlled by President Jayewardene's son, Ravindra Vimal. Even some of

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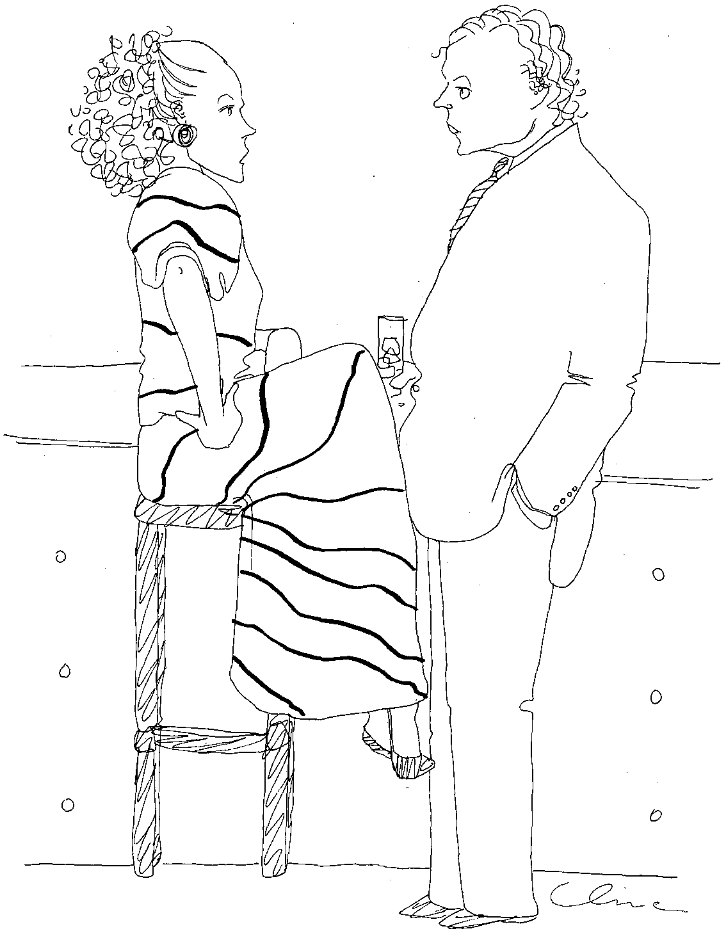
the President's closest advisers fear that the S.T.F. could become Jayewardene's Praetorian Guard. It had earned a reputation—and the condemnation of Amnesty International—for brutalizing the east, with torture and illegal killings, especially in the area of Batticaloa. Its strength had risen to six thousand four hundred in the Eastern Province, and its killings were indiscriminate. The Army tried to stop the S.T.F. troops, but to no avail. "They shoot anyone who is frightened and runs away when they come," I was told by Sam Tambimuttu, secretary of the Batticaloa Citizens' Committee. "And if one of their men is killed then they shoot anyone who simply stands still." Tambimuttu, a Tamil lawyer and businessman, came to meet me at my hotel with a suitcase that contained hundreds of affidavits from political prisoners who had been badly tortured, and hundreds more from relatives of prisoners who had disappeared. According to a June report by Amnesty International, more than five hundred Tamil prisoners had disappeared over the previous thirty months. Mr. Tambimuttu had the names of all of them—five hundred and eighteen persons. One of them, Sivaguru Balasundaram, was only twelve years old.

It was impossible to tell how many political prisoners were being held, because Sri Lankan security officials consistently denied that people had been arrested, even though eyewitnesses swore that they had been. Mr. Tambimuttu and other human-rights activists estimated that there were about six thousand Tamil political prisoners packing Sri Lanka's crowded, filthy jails. The worst, I was told, was the Boosa Army Camp, in the south. Consisting of rows of low, whitewashed buildings surrounded by barbed wire, it held thousands of Tamil prisoners, none of whom had been tried.



"But do you think we can fit our relationship into a studio?"

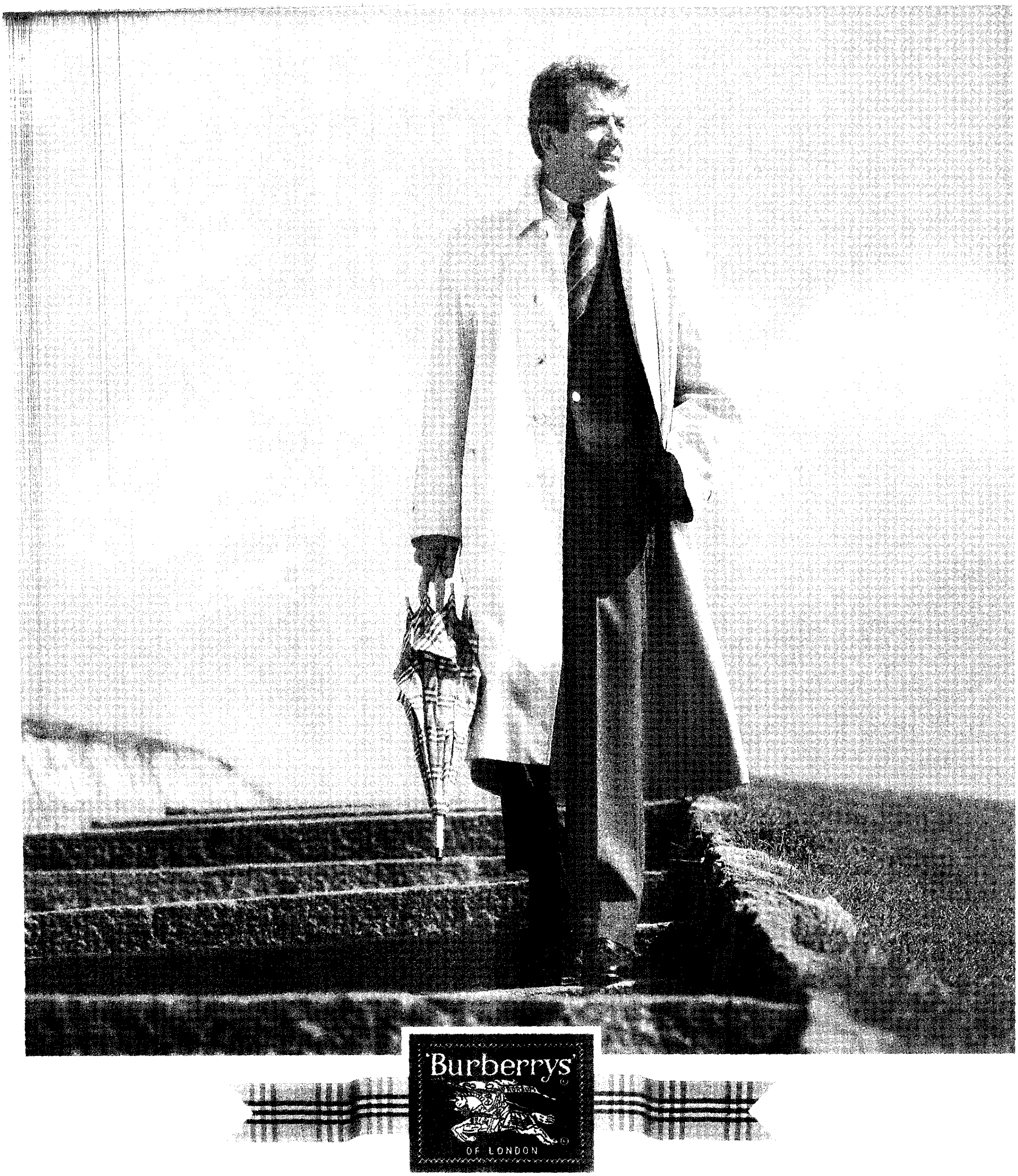
Many recent arrivals were from Batticaloa. The S.T.F. was cordoning off the district's villages and arresting everyone between fifteen and forty-five; many of those arrested were then tortured, for no apparent reason. Prisoners, their hands tied behind their backs, were suspended from the ceiling and beaten with heated iron rods. It was called "helicopter training," and Mr. Tambimuttu had documents showing that for every fifteen who went through it at least one died.

The S.T.F. also regularly set fire to Tamil villages in the Eastern Province. I visited four that had been totally or partly destroyed, by the S.T.F., the Home Guards, the Army, or a combination of the three. The village of Uppuveli was two miles north of Trincomalee. It had once had three hundred families, seventy-five per cent Tamil, the rest Muslim. But from July of 1983 to January of 1986 Uppuveli had been systematically devastated. Today, it held no trace of human life; the jungle had moved in. As we approached Uppuveli Junction, the signs of destruction began. Houses snuggled in coastal palms were masses of rubble; here and there a precarious wall rose out of nowhere. It could have been an archeological site. At the gutted Vairavar Temple, a statue of the goddess Kali was charred black. Everything else had been looted.

THE villages of Kinniya and Alankerly were on a tiny neck of land hidden away in one of Trincomalee's many harbors, and were accessible only by boat. Kinniya was Muslim; Alankerly was Tamil. For generations, the two villages had lived happily side by side. Now they were part of Sri Lanka's divide. Sri Lanka's 1.1 million Muslims (seven and a half per cent of the population) were not a cohesive group. Although the vast majority were descended from the Arab traders who came in the eighth century, others had arrived from Malaysia, and had been in Sri Lanka only for the last hundred years. They were concentrated in the Eastern Province, along its filigree coast, and had traditionally lived among the Tamils, spoken their language, and shared their lives. But their leaders were conservative and had always supported the government of the Sinhalese majority.

As I waited at the tip of China Bay for the ferry to Kinniya, I was caught up among people and chickens, ox-driven carts, burlap bags of rice and sugar—everything was crossing. A group of young men surrounded my driver and asked where we were headed. Why were we here? An outsider made people nervous. Raja told me that that had not been true in the past.

"You mustn't go to Alankerly," one young man warned us. "It's been taken over by the boys." "The boys" in this instance meant not just the Tamil Tigers but also other separatist groups. In the east, the Tigers' rivals still retained some strength. "We used to live there," the young men told us, "but we



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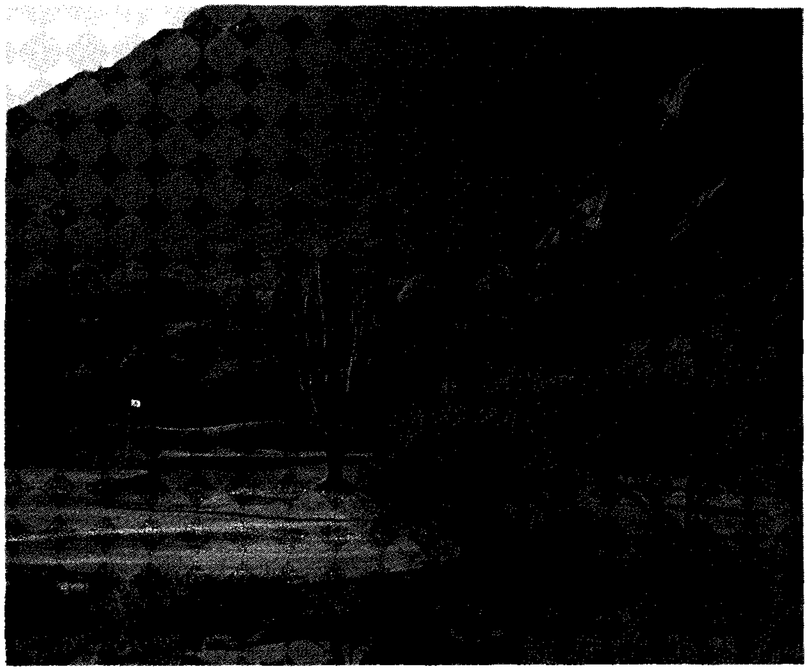

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never go back. The boys will take you hostage."

Three bewildered-looking policemen with automatic rifles stood guarding the ferry stop. The boats didn't run later than five-thirty, because after dark the boys would steal the engines. Finally, we boarded the rickety ferry, a wooden platform with a Yamaha engine at one end. Our car was kept from sliding off by two small rocks. As I looked around at the passengers, it was the young men who most struck my eye. They squatted on the floor of the ferry or hung from its sides, and I wondered how many of them were the boys.

A palm-studded peninsula sprang up before us, lapped by the sea. Fishing boats and tea stalls dotted a beautiful white sand beach. Kinniya was a swirl of arabesque lattices, minarets, and mosques.

After the ferry docked, we set off, following a narrow, sandy path that connected the two villages. Dark, dense forest engulfed us. I asked Raja to keep his eyes open for "the boys."

"You do that, Madam," he answered. "I'm looking for mines."

In Alankerly, I found the village schoolmaster, a sombre bald man with heavily lined eyes who was always addressed as Mr. Konamalai. I asked him what had happened there.

Until July 23, 1986, he said, Alankerly had been a bustling village of a hundred and fifty families. Now there were seventy-five. The Muslim Home Guards from Kinniya, along with the S.T.F., had arrived at three in the morning and burned forty-eight houses to the ground.

Why had they done it?

Mr. Konamalai answered, "It was a response to the boys." Then he said, "No one will permit anyone to live in peace! The politicians, the Army, the boys, the Home Guards—no one thinks at all about the villagers."

The violence began in May of 1986, when two boys from Alankerly, both Tamil Tigers, had gone to Kinniya to collect some sweets during a Muslim festival. The Muslims knew they were Tigers and alerted the police. The boys were arrested, and joined the "disappeared." Two days later, a hundred Tamil Tigers took revenge, marching through Alankerly from their base camp in the jungle, ten miles down the road. When they arrived in Kinniya, they burned ten buildings to the ground. How many villagers died and how many fled is still not known. The villagers of

Alankerly knew it wasn't over. "Then, on July 23rd, twenty-five Muslim Home Guards from Kinniya and ten men from the security forces arrived," the schoolmaster said. "They burned down half the village. Everyone fled to the jungle that night. Sixty-one families never returned. Were they arrested? Killed in the jungle? Or did they flee? We have no idea. We simply sit and wait."

One man, a paddy manager, showed me a copy of a letter he had written to his superior in Trincomalee:

> SIR,
>
> I beg to inform you that the following properties of mine were damaged, burned or stolen by the security forces: One Honda motorcycle, one sewing machine, one push-bicycle, two stools, one umbrella large, one umbrella small, 10 gunny sacks, and many dresses of my wife.

I asked Mr. Konamalai why Alankerly had been singled out.

He answered, fatalistically, "We had committed two sins. Two members of the Tigers came from our village. They were decent, honest boys. A hundred others were down the road, and we allowed them to march through our village on their way to Kinniya."

The Tamil villagers of Alankerly no longer tended their paddy fields. The fields were outside the village, three miles away, and seven miles beyond them was the base camp of the boys.

Back in Trincomalee, a Muslim magistrate I'll call Ahmed began to explain the Muslims' position. Ahmed lived in a Tamil-Muslim neighborhood, and outside his stucco bungalow he flew three mourning flags—green for Muslims, yellow for Buddhist monks, and white for everyone else who had died in Sri Lanka's war.

"The situation is such here in the east that whatever you say you'll offend the security forces or you'll offend the boys. We're caught in the middle," Ahmed said. "We've always lived with the Tamils, we're Tamil-speaking, but in the past most Muslims were fervent supporters of the government. Now, with the Eastern Province hanging in the balance and the Muslims tottering on the brink, we're being courted, then terrorized equally by the Tamils and the Sinhalese. Look at Nilaveli." Nilaveli was a village just to the north. "It's a stronghold of the Tigers, but it has a large Muslim population. The young Muslim men come to Trincomalee for provisions, chilies, and rice. They usually come by bicycle, and are stopped over and over at Army checkpoints. The Army accuses them of taking food for the Tamil Tigers. Then, when they finally reach Nilaveli, having been humiliated by the Army at every checkpoint on the road, the boys find them and say, 'You've gone to town. Have you gone to give the security forces information on us?' " He burst out, "For God's sake, let us live in peace! We are thirsting for it, like a vast desert thirsting for rain."

On top of a filing cabinet in Ahmed's study were pictures of Winston Churchill and the writer Arthur C. Clarke. A wizened old mullah was in the kitchen teaching Ahmed's teenage daughter passages from the Koran.

As Brother Hilary Joseph had done in Mannar, Ahmed pulled out a ledger from the filing cabinet, its pages yellowed with age. It held a record of four years of abuses against Muslims in the east.

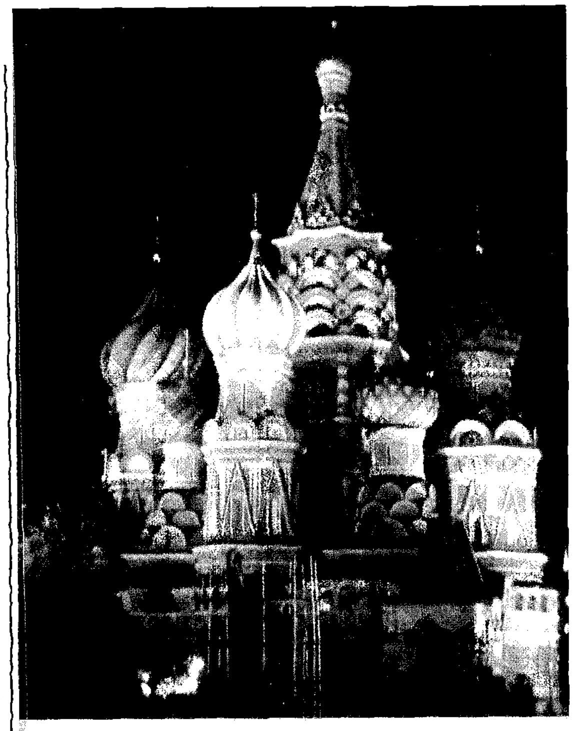
"We are a minority within a minority," he said sadly. He began reciting from his ledger: Young Muslims tortured by the security forces for allegedly assisting the boys; young Muslims humiliated by the boys for being alleged government informers; a Muslim butcher accused by the boys of dealing in stolen cattle. Before the mosque authorities could take any action, the butcher was found dead. On June 14th, thirteen Muslims were killed when a land mine exploded under their van. "Today," Ahmed said, "none of us know where we are."

The old-guard Muslim leadership had written to President Jayewardene on April 14th, asking for a separate Muslim province in Amparai District, in the east. The younger generation had joined the Tamil Tigers, the Sinhalese-dominated village Home Guards, or a shadowy Muslim guerrilla organization that called itself the Jihad. Another generation, another culture, was now behind the gun.

Ahmed bitterly resented young Muslims' having been caught in the fray. "The government most certainly recruited Muslims into the Home Guard in order to split the Tamils and the Muslims," he declared. "Any government would like to snatch us; so would the boys. It's like a game of rugby, and we are the ball."

If the Muslims were asked to make a choice today, where would their sympathies lie if the Eastern Province were given to the Tamils?

"That's a very difficult question,"



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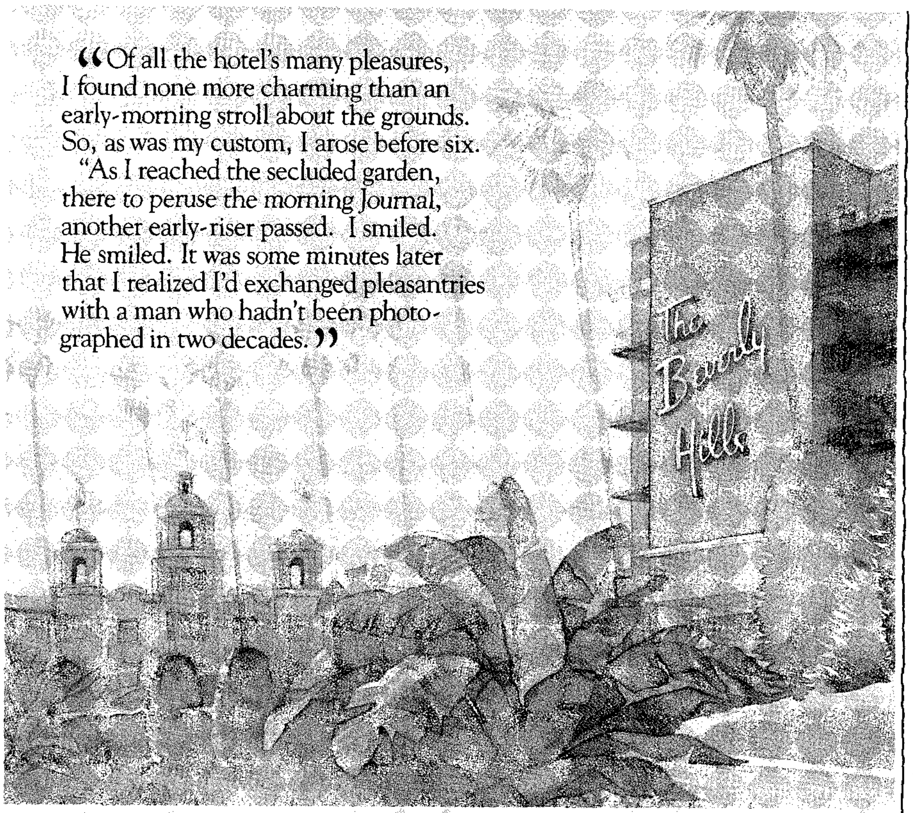

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“As I reached the secluded garden, there to peruse the morning Journal, another early-riser passed. I smiled. He smiled. It was some minutes later that I realized I’d exchanged pleasantries with a man who hadn’t been photographed in two decades.”

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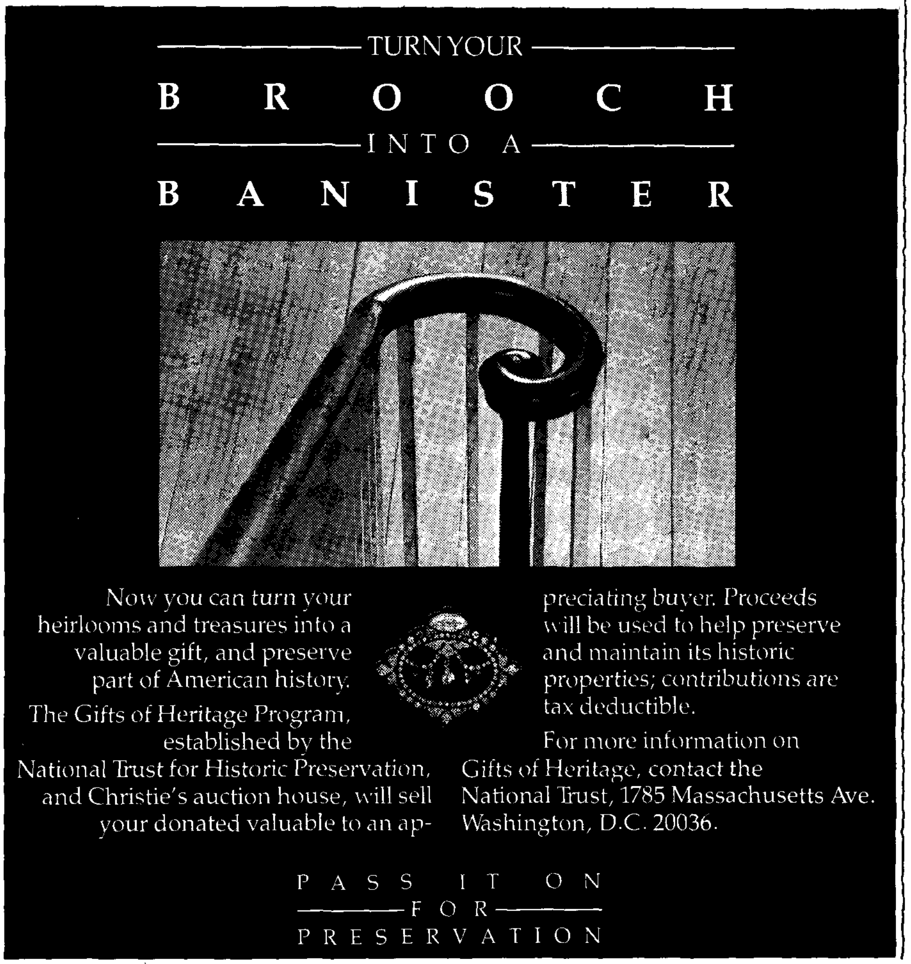

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Ahmed said. “There is a clash of loyalties. The Muslims in the east are divided. A small section supports Tamil Eelam. Another section objects. If it happens, we’ll just have to accept it. The views of the silent majority? Nobody knows. The situation is so sensitive that people are afraid to talk.”

Ahmed was about to put his ledger away, but before he did he recited dates and names of Muslims who had been kidnapped, many of whose families he was representing in court. No one knew who had snatched them—the security forces or the Tamil militants. “It’s individual acts of terror against the Muslims,” he said. “There have been no rampages of the security forces through Muslim villages, as there have been through Tamil ones. They have not destroyed Muslim villages. But”—he hesitated—“the effect is the same. The Sinhalese forces want us to leave.”

IN Trincomalee’s old Raj center, though the bungalows had been neglected and the gracious lawns had gone to seed, there was still the feel of the British around the naval base. The pride and joy of the Empire, Trincomalee was Britain’s first naval possession on the coast of Ceylon. It remained a British base until 1957, and its sixteen sweeping harbors and tiny interwoven bays had concealed the entire Eastern Fleet of the Royal Navy during the Second World War. The port’s magnificence was apparent; so was its geopolitical importance as a gateway to the Bay of Bengal. It was also the best port in the Indian Ocean for basing a large surface fleet.

“It is extraordinary,” the acting Armed Forces Commander, Colonel Ananda Suriabhandari, told me in the briefing room of the area military-command headquarters. “Its depth is limitless, it can camouflage a hundred to two hundred ships. It is breathtaking. And everyone wants it.”

It had been rumored strongly for a number of years that the United States wanted Trincomalee as a base for the Seventh Fleet. Washington took its first tentative step toward this goal in 1985, when the Sri Lankan government gave approval for an international consortium, headed by a United States company, Oroleum, to lease three hundred oil-storage tanks that the British had built in Trincomalee. The scheme collapsed, because of falling oil prices, the worsening of the war, and New Delhi's very strongly expressed concern.

Many American commentators had suggested that if the Tamil Tigers—"radical leftists," they called them—ever established Tamil Eelam, Trincomalee would likely become a friendly Soviet port of call. That was not really the point. It was India, the major power in South Asia, that openly coveted Trincomalee. And New Delhi, though it was clearly closer to Moscow than it was to Washington, had its own ambitions as a regional superpower, and found President Jayewardene's pro-Western policies increasingly nettlesome. It was particularly vexed by the involvement of Israel, China, and Pakistan in Sri Lanka's war—Pakistan's, of course, being the most vexing of all.

Israel had helped Sri Lanka set up an intelligence and counter-insurgency system; Pakistan was training two hundred Sri Lankan troops each year and, in June, had responded favorably to Colombo's request for a system of anti-aircraft defense. China, too, had answered President Jayewardene's call and agreed to provide defense equipment, as had South Africa. And an odd assortment of British mercenaries were dashing about. They were members of the Keeny Meeny Services, which, according to the congressional testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, had provided mercenaries to assist the Contras in Nicaragua. Such mercenaries had been in Sri Lanka since 1984. Veterans of the Special Air Service (S.A.S.), they were co-piloting combat helicopters and training the S.T.F.

"We will get help from the Devil himself if necessary," President Jayewardene told me in 1984 of his decision to bring in the Keeny Meenies and to invite the Israelis back to Sri Lanka for counter-insurgency work. (Diplomatic relations had been broken off in 1970, when Mrs. Bandaranaike returned to power.) "No other country was prepared to help us, and we had asked them all—the Americans, the British, certain European countries," Jayewardene said. "And if we don't stop the terrorists now Sri Lanka could be turned into the Northern Ireland of the Indian Ocean."

ON June 3, 1987, while President Jayewardene's Army was moving through the Jaffna Peninsula, Rajiv Gandhi had given an order that nineteen fishing boats be dispatched from Rameshwaram across the narrow Palk Strait to deliver "humanitarian assistance" to the Tamils in Sri Lanka's north. Rameshwaram, the Island of Light, on the southern tip of India, is one of Hinduism's holiest spots. According to the Ramayana, it was from there that the armies of the god Rama set sail to capture Sri Lanka and slay Ravana, the island's demon-king. Gandhi's undertaking had been more like a maritime comedy. His fleet was leaky, and Sri Lanka's tiny Navy blocked its passage, and the boats had to return to base. This rebuff and the consequent loss of face had led Gandhi to parachute the relief supplies.

"The unity and integrity of Sri Lanka are very important to us," an Indian diplomat had told me, "but they are not nearly as important as the unity and integrity of India." It was a fanciful statement. India's unity and integrity were hardly under threat, but Gandhi was increasingly besieged by domestic problems—not just the growing violence by the Sikhs in the Punjab but also allegations of scandal touching his closest friends and aides, and defections from his Cabinet—and he badly needed a foreign-policy success. He was also becoming weary of Prabakaran and his Tamil Tigers.

The Tamil separatists, a dizzying array of groups and ideologies, had battled each other for a decade, and Prabakaran had consolidated his power through deadly shootouts with his rivals over the past two years. Five major groups now survived, and, though still deeply distrustful of one another, they were roughly aligned in two major camps. The Tigers worked closely with EROS, which specialized in explosives, yet EROS's dexterous leadership kept a cautious foot in the other camp as well, for it was the three other groups—the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, or E.P.R.L.F.; the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization, or TELO; and the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam, or PLOTE—that were now receiving training from RAW.

Many Tamil intellectuals exiled in Madras distrusted Prabakaran and held him responsible for the continuing disunity among the separatist groups. "His extreme nationalism will take us to Fascism," a leftist Tamil intellectual told me last summer. "And he has erected extraordinary barriers of caste." This was an allusion to the Tigers' origins among the fishermen's caste. In reality, the Tigers' inverse

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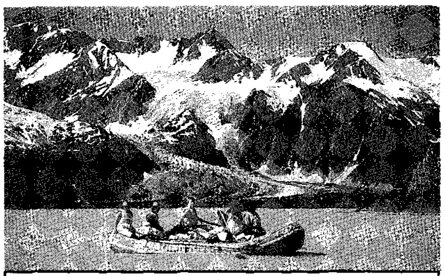

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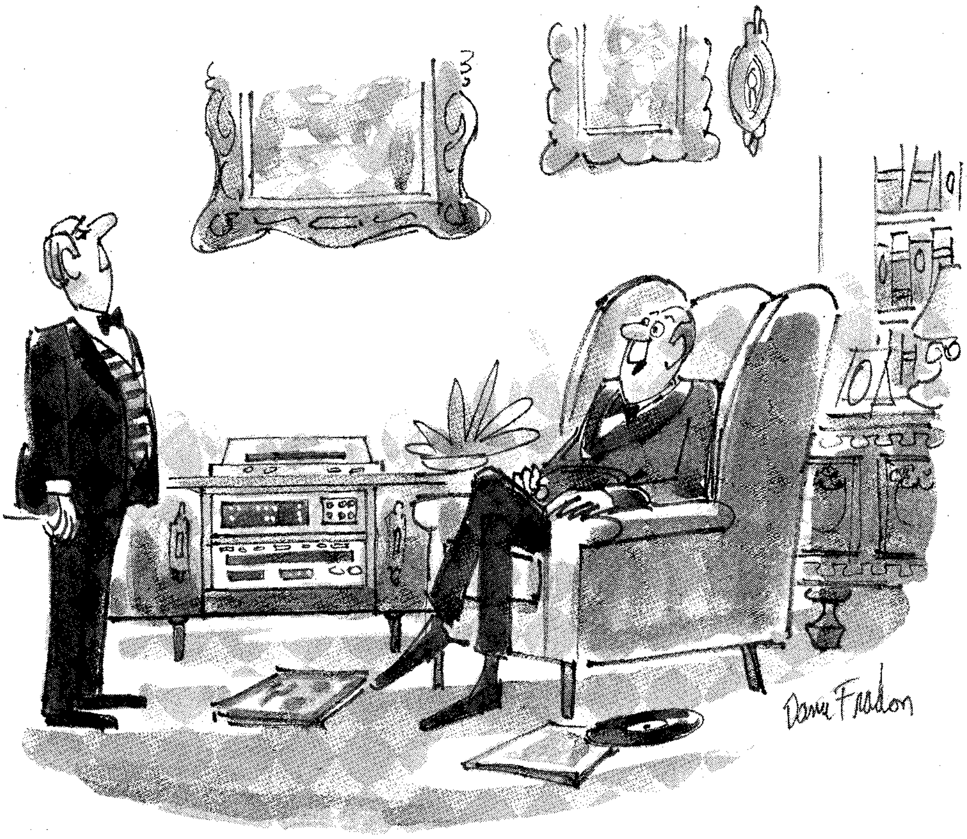

"Fenton, bring me my pipe, my bowl, and my Nat King Cole records."

caste barriers were crumbling; many of the Karaiar commanders had been replaced by Vellalas, from the higher, landed farmers' caste, and many field commanders were university students or graduates. Nevertheless, the rival groups wanted him out. "It is the right time in Tamil politics for India to take the upper hand and control Prabakaran," the intellectual told me.

On June 18th, fifteen anti-aircraft guns provided by RAW left Rameshwaram for Sri Lanka by boat, along with nearly five hundred fighters from the three Indian-backed separatist groups—men who had just completed a two-month training program in the use of anti-aircraft guns which was conducted by Indian Intelligence officers in the foothills of Uttar Pradesh. Now Prabakaran's rivals had a system of anti-aircraft defense.

Thirteen days later, Jyotindra Nath Dixit, the Indian High Commissioner, just back from consultations in New Delhi, called on President Jayewardene. The President was under great pressure. Not only was a military victory over the rebels impossible but his Finance Minister at the time, Ronnie de Mel, had just returned from a Paris meeting with representatives of the major Western donors of aid to Sri Lanka. Fifty per cent of his country's budget was financed by foreign aid, and although the donors had committed six hundred and twenty-five million dollars for the current year, they had also presented de Mel with an ultimatum. If foreign aid was to continue, they said, there must be a settlement by the end of the year. And the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, concerned about Sri Lanka's rising defense expenditures and its debt servicing, were making the same demand.

In the course of a series of meetings with Dixit, Jayewardene initially declared that he would not go beyond what had been agreed upon between India and Sri Lanka on December 19th—a semi-autonomous Tamil administration in the north, which, through an elected provincial council, would have wide power over land distribution, education, and security. After two weeks of negotiations, however, he agreed to a provisional merger of the island's north and east. The resulting new, enlarged province would be governed by a semi-autonomous, Tamil-controlled provincial council until a referendum could allow the Tamils, the Sinhalese, and the now critically important Muslims of the Eastern Province to decide where they belonged. The settlement was a tricky one for Jayewardene, for he also had to work around the opposition of his hawkish Prime Minister, Premadasa, whose hatred of India was such that he often referred to Gandhi and his late mother as "the calf" and "the cow." On July 16th, while Premadasa was on an official visit to Japan, the new agreement was presented to the thirteen-member "Inner" Cabinet at a hastily convened secret meeting at the President's home. In an unprecedented arrangement, Ambassador Dixit was present, to "clarify" any points. With Premadasa absent, the Inner Cabinet was split six to six on the plan, but after much confusion, some bitterness, and a few threats the ministers agreed to leave the matter in the President's hands.

In some two weeks of his hectic shuttle diplomacy in an Indian Air Force plane, carrying drafts, maps, bits of paper, and an Oxford pocket dictionary in a padlocked attaché case, Dixit met with the leaders of the Tamil moderates and of the various separatist groups. The agreement was refined to reflect a number of the guerrilla leaders' primary concerns, and all of them except Prabakaran agreed to the final draft. Prabakaran objected to the referendum on the merger of the north and east, fearing that the easterners might undo the merger when they went to the polls, and also objected to a requirement that the rebels lay down their arms prior to the Sri Lankan Army's withdrawal from the north and east. On July 24th, he was airlifted from Jaffna to New Delhi, along with key aides, in a flotilla of Indian Air Force helicopters. He remained in India, still objecting, for the next ten days.

Gandhi waited while his foreign-policy advisers attempted to cajole or coerce Prabakaran. The Sri Lankan government had already announced that Gandhi would fly to Colombo to sign the agreement on Wednesday, July 29th. At midnight on Tuesday, six hours before Gandhi was to emplane, Prabakaran was driven from the government-owned Ashok Hotel, where he had been staying, to the Prime Minister's office, in the elegant viceregal complex of South Block. It was the two men's first meeting since Prabakaran had arrived, and they talked, argued, and threatened each other until dawn. Prabakaran still refused to support the agreement or to lay down his arms. He was driven back to the Ashok Hotel and, guarded by élite Indian commandos, was placed under virtual house arrest.

That morning, Gandhi left for Colombo to sign the accord, carrying with him an exchange of letters, still not in final form, that would give India a powerful voice in Sri Lanka's foreign and defense affairs. Gandhi was determined that in return for helping Jayewardene to end the war he would achieve some of his own regional and geopolitical goals.

SMOKE hung over Colombo and debris littered its stately boulevards as Gandhi and his party were whisked through deserted streets to the official residence, President's House. All of Sri Lanka was under a twenty-four-hour curfew after two devastating days of Sinhalese rioting that had begun as a peaceful protest by Buddhist monks. The monks, divided over how to protest the accord, which they saw as tantamount to granting the Tamils their visionary homeland, had gathered at Colombo's old Bo Tree, similar to the one under which the Buddha had found enlightenment. "Let us fast," said the elders. "No," said the young monks. "Let us march." Crowds swelled around them. Then the angry chanters turned into a mob. Sri Lankan authorities were certain that the J.V.P. was leading them. The mob lashed out at anything that was part of the infrastructure, attacking government buildings and gutting a central telephone exchange. Scores of burned-out buses cluttered the Victorian green. Seventy people had died, and all around Colombo, the astrologers noted, the skies were filled with crows.

The document that Rajiv Gandhi and J. R. Jayewardene were about to sign was a five-page Memorandum of Understanding, which needed the approval of both nations' parliaments. Whether it would be ratified by the Sri Lankan parliament was not at all certain. Though Jayewardene had given his deputies a tongue-lashing only days before—he'd threatened to dissolve the legislature and call new elections if they didn't endorse the accord—the United National Party was divided. Premadasa, who had returned from Japan, was noticeably absent from the reception for Gandhi, and so were three ministers, including Lalith Athulathmudali, the powerful National Security Minister.

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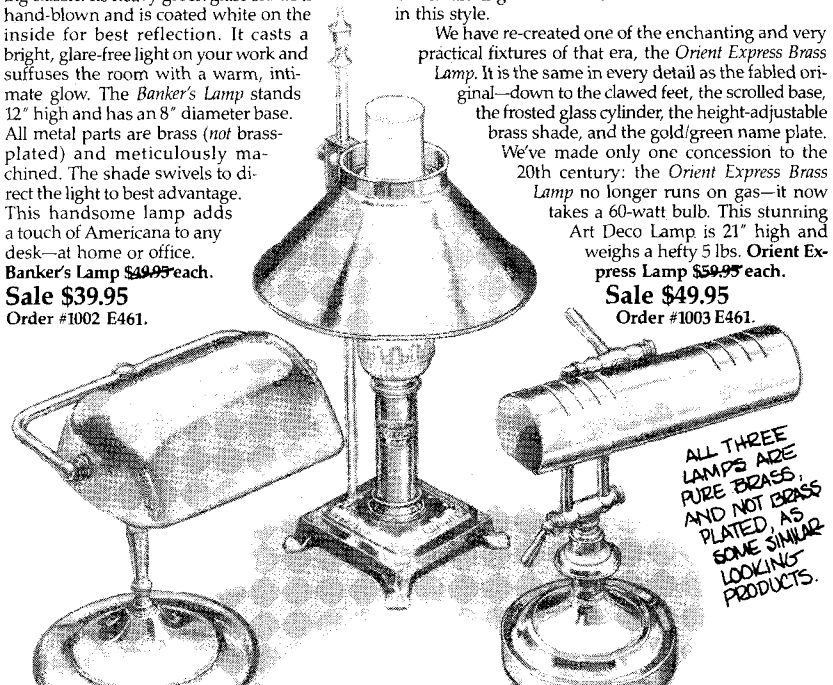
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tions for provincial councils, including the new, single council for the north and east, would be held throughout the island within three months. However, the precise powers of the councils were not defined. The referendum on the merger of the north and east would be held in the Eastern Province on or before December 31, 1988, unless postponed by President Jayewardene.

In a move that was bound to unsettle the Army's lower ranks, the Army was confined to barracks in the north and east, and to only those barracks that had existed prior to the Vadamarachchi campaign. Thus, the Army relinquished all the territory it had so painfully gained. The Tamil rebels would, of course, lay down their arms, a general amnesty would be granted, and the draconian state of emergency would be lifted in the Northern and Eastern Provinces by August 15th.

Sinhalese, Tamil, and English would be Sri Lanka's official languages. India agreed to deport any Sri Lankans who from its soil engaged in terrorist activities or advocated separatism; to provide Sri Lanka with military assistance; and to help police the Palk Strait in joint naval patrols.

Gandhi's mixture of casualness and impatience was apparent to those present as he and President Jayewardene sipped tea in the high-ceilinged eighteenth-century drawing room of President's House and aides put the final touches on the letters that the two leaders would exchange. The letters proved to be the most controversial part of the accord, for they showed that Gandhi had indeed realized some of his geopolitical goals.

President Jayewardene pledged not to permit Trincomalee or any of Sri Lanka's other ports to be used for military purposes by any country "in a manner prejudicial" to the interests of India; he also agreed that India and Sri Lanka would jointly develop Trincomalee's potentially lucrative oil-storage tanks, and guaranteed that no foreign broadcasting facility in Sri Lanka would engage in "military or intelligence" work—a stipulation clearly directed at the Voice of America. As for Pakistan, Israel, and China, any assistance from them was for all intents and purposes precluded by a stipulation that Colombo would consult with New Delhi before bringing in any "foreign military or intelligence personnel."

Many Sinhalese and Tamil moderates who basically supported the accord were unsettled by India's new and very substantial role in determining Sri Lanka's foreign policy and controlling its defense. In the fashionable bungalows of Cinnamon Gardens, worried Sinhalese were asking whether their eighty-year-old President had bartered the country's independence for uncertain peace. They recognized, however, that in any event India was bound to play a major role in Sri Lankan affairs. Sri Lanka could not defeat the Tamil Tigers without India's support and without the closing of their training bases and political headquarters in Madras, nor could it stand against India's vastly superior military might.

"Your visit has been one of the most controversial since Prince Vijaya came here, twenty-five hundred years ago," Jayewardene told Gandhi. "He created the Sinhala race. I hope your visit will help it to re-create and refurbish itself." Jayewardene's words were clearly unpalatable to many Sinhalese, as was evidenced by a twenty-two-year-old sailor in the Presidential Honor Guard who attempted to hit Gandhi over the head with his rifle butt. Jayewardene, looking on, said, rather strangely, that the sailor appeared to be suffering from sunstroke.

AFTER the agreement was signed, Prabakaran was allowed to return to Jaffna, and on August 4th more than a hundred thousand people flooded the grounds of the city's ancient Hindu temple, and spilled over into narrow streets and crowded onto rooftops, to see the man who had been underground for so many years. Prabakaran mounted the podium with three Tiger military commanders and other political aides. Out of military uniform, his hair now speckled with gray, he looked more like a portly businessman than like a guerrilla leader. And he had left his suicide capsule behind. The large crowd gave him a rousing reception appropriate to a conquering hero, and he addressed them from a raised wooden dais festooned with the Tigers' red banners and red-and-yellow flags. Their cheering contrasted starkly with the grim look on his face.

His address was sober, not inflammatory, and he surprised everyone by announcing that the Tamil Tigers had agreed to lay down their arms. "We had no choice," he said. "We had to toe the Indian government's line. We were not prepared to go into battle against the Indian Army, and are bowing to geopolitical realities and

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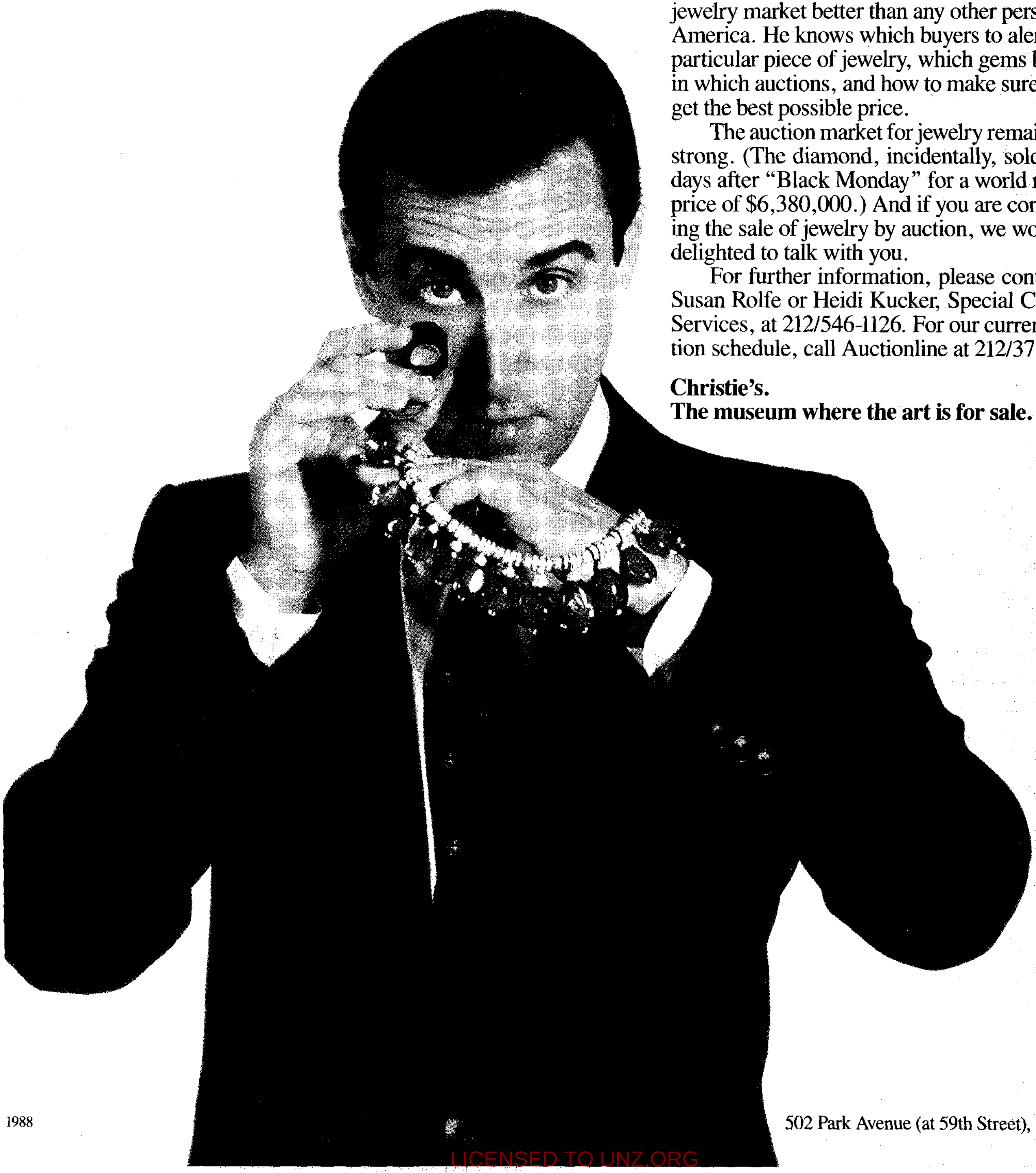

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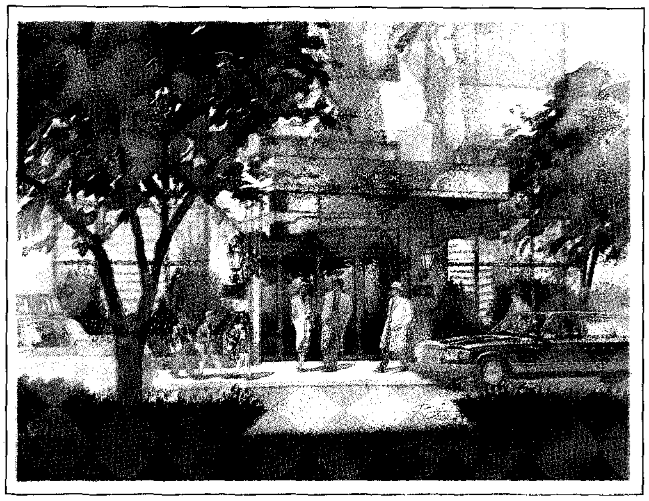

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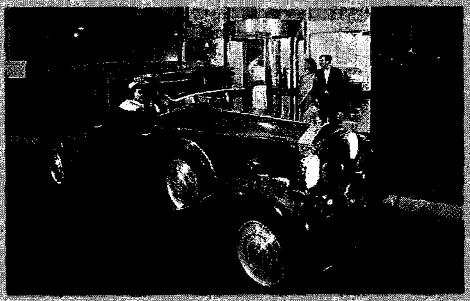

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superior military strength. But this is an Indo–Sri Lankan agreement, not a lasting solution. We not only did not sign this agreement, we were not consulted. We were presented with it as a fait accompli. The only lasting solution is a separate Tamil state."

He said that he would not accept the post of chief minister of the newly merged north and east, but that the Tigers would contest the scheduled provincial-council elections. He left his own future open, only vowing to continue the separatist struggle "through other methods and means"—a statement that was worrisome to the governments of both Sri Lanka and India.

As Prabakaran left the temple grounds, in a blue minibus, surrounded by guerrillas still brandishing their Soviet machine guns, the war-weary people of Jaffna cheered wildly; no one was certain whether they cheered because the war appeared to be over or because the thirty-two-year-old fisherman had done more than anyone else to give them back their Tamil identity and their dignity.

On August 5th, at Palaly Airbase, now the headquarters of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, the chief of the Tigers' political wing, who was known as Yogi, handed his 9-mm. Beretta pistol to General Sepala Attygale, the Sri Lankan Secretary of Defense, as a symbol of the Tigers' compliance with the turnover of arms. General Attygale put his hand on the weapon to acknowledge the surrender, and presented Yogi with a rolled-up document declaring a general amnesty. Five Army trucks filled with weapons sped onto Palaly's one small airstrip, disgorging nearly two hundred weapons—AK-47s, heavy machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, 150-mm. mortars and rocket launchers, and a good number of rusty Second World War rifles, bandoliers, and submachine guns.

No one had seriously expected the forty-five hundred Tigers, or the eighteen hundred other armed militants, to hand in all their arms. The key question had been how many weapons would be considered enough. Major General Harkirat Singh, the commander of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, which was charged with enforcing the ceasefire and the surrender of arms, had said that if he was not satisfied with the quantity and quality of arms received he had the writ to go out and search for more, but he had also said that he expected to receive two thousand weapons. Sri Lankan Intelligence sources had estimated that the militants had at least six thousand weapons at hand.

Jayewardene, who only three months earlier had compared Rajiv Gandhi to Hitler, now told foreign correspondents, "I believe in personal friendships, and in foreign-policy friendships; and I am placing my entire trust in my personal relationship with Rajiv Gandhi to guarantee Sri Lanka's peace." (Two Indian Leander Class frigates, whose combined complements included three helicopters and at least eighty Marine commandos, were standing by in Colombo's port to evacuate Jyotindra Nath Dixit and President Jayewardene in an emergency.) Jayewardene also said that Sri Lanka must accept the regional domination of India. "We can't stand up to any country. They can conquer us," he said. The President was bitter that the major Western powers had abandoned him to India. "The world's powers have accepted that India is the great power in this region," he said, "and America won't lift a finger to help me without asking India." He had requested military assistance from the United States, Britain, Pakistan, and China the previous week. Only Washington had responded, and only to send spare parts. "You never know with these big powers," Jayewardene said. "You can't trust anyone." Displaying a bewildering mixture of humility and authority, eccentricity and wit, the "old man" of Sri Lankan politics had taken full responsibility for the four years of civil war. On the day the accord was signed, he had told a hushed press conference, "My own lack of intelligence, lack of foresight and courage were to blame"—for his not making concessions to the Tamils sooner. He was asked what had happened to make him change his mind, and answered, "The combination of the stars and the planets was most auspicious during July."

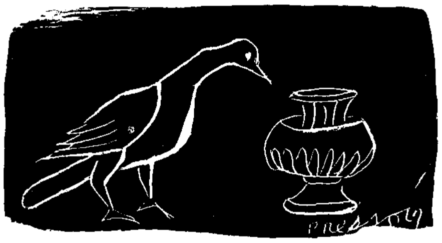
IN truth, the Tamil Tigers never stopped fighting. They had handed in what was estimated to be only twenty per cent of their weapons, and within six weeks of the signing of the peace pact they had eliminated more than a hundred and fifty members of rival separatist groups, mainly in north-central Sri Lanka and in the east. They invaded homes, waylaid buses, and opened fire in the streets. The passive Indian Peace-Keeping Force and the policymakers in New Delhi were clearly amazed. Refusing to rise to the challenge, the peacekeepers permitted the internal warfare to rage, thereby sapping their credibility in the eyes of ordinary Tamils, who had initially welcomed them as guarantors of their safety and of an elusive peace.

At the same time, Prabakaran seemed to be doing well in negotiations for control of the semi-autonomous interim council for the north and east. He demanded and received a majority of the council's twelve seats. Then, according to the Tigers, on October 3rd things came apart when seventeen of their members, including three of Prabakaran's most trusted aides, were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy off the northern coast as they were bringing arms from India in a trawler. National Security Minister Athulathmudali insisted that the men be brought to Colombo for interrogation—a move that Indian officials strongly opposed. Athulathmudali won out.

As the seventeen men moved across the tarmac of Palaly Airbase toward a waiting Indian Air Force plane, Kumarrapan, a senior Tiger commander, nodded, and they all swallowed the cyanide capsules that hung from their necks. All but four died. The bodies were returned to Jaffna, where tens of thousands of Tamils paid homage to the thirteen as they lay in state.

Prabakaran's reaction to the mass suicide was quick. The Tigers' first victims were eight Sri Lankan soldiers they were holding captive, and the next were four policemen; all twelve were murdered on October 5th. The following day, the Tigers issued a statement formally announcing that they were opposed to the peace plan, and they began a rampage in the east. They hijacked trains and buses, and shot the Sinhalese passengers or hacked them to death. In Batticaloa, they rounded up Sinhalese men, women, and children and killed them. All told, they killed more than two hundred people in four days.

On October 9th, General K. Sundarji, India's Chief of Army Staff, flew to Colombo to consult with an outraged Jayewardene and with Sri Lankan government officials and members of the general staff. Mincing few words, Jayewardene demanded that India meet its obligations under the peace accord: it must disarm the Tigers; otherwise, he would be compelled to send the peacekeepers home. Stung into action, Indian forces set out the following day upon Operation Pawan (the word means "wind"), to destroy the Tamil Tigers as a guerrilla organization, beginning with their stronghold in the city of Jaffna.



It is impossible to say how many died in the battle that followed, but the number was at least two thousand people—between seven hundred and a thousand of them civilians. (The Catholic Church of Jaffna disputes the generally accepted civilian toll, claiming that between three thousand and four thousand civilians lost their lives.) Of the Tamil Tigers, between three hundred and four hundred died in the battle for the city, and the Indian Army lost more than five hundred soldiers and twenty-five officers. (This is the figure that Indian defense officials concede privately.) It was the highest death toll that the Indian Army had suffered since the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War—evidence of astonishing blunders and miscalculations on the part of the fourth-largest army in the world.

As Soviet-built Mi-24 helicopter gunships emptied their formidable arsenal of rockets and rapid-fire shells, the Indians showed that they were prepared to take extreme measures to put the Tamil Tigers down, yet the Tigers, improbably, held out for seventeen days. Despite the huge disparity in firepower and numbers (some nine thousand Indian troops were involved), twenty-five hundred guerrillas, many barefoot and dressed only in shorts or in wraparound, skirtlike lungis, held the Indian Army at bay. No longer a ragtag group of fishermen's sons, the Tamil Tigers had evolved into one of the most effective guerrilla forces in Asia. They had been trained, after all, by the Indian Army and India's RAW. Yet the Indians now fatally underestimated their former protégés' dedication and strength, their fighting skill, their insane bravery, and their intimate knowledge of the local terrain.

In late October, the Indian Army duly claimed to be in control of Jaffna, but it proved a hollow victory. During

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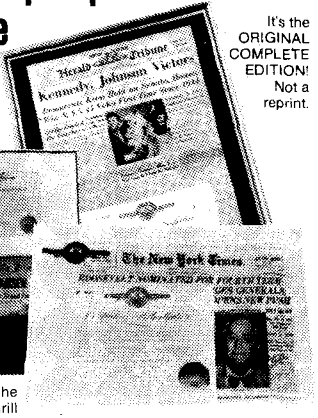

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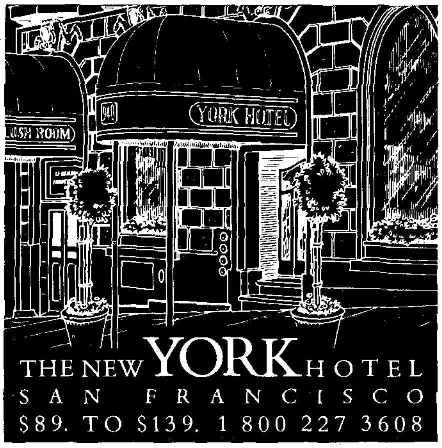

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the last days of the battle, Prabakaran and twelve hundred Tiger fighters slipped through the Indian net into the swamps and jungles; other guerrillas, many of them teen-agers, remained behind. After coating their weapons with grease and wrapping them in plastic sheeting, they hid them, dropping them into the myriad lagoons and harbors of Jaffna, or burying them in the powdery red soil. Then they slipped quietly into the refugee camps dotting the north. A nameless, faceless army, unknown and unseen, had blended into the civilian population from which it came. One Sri Lankan Intelligence official concluded, two months after the battle began, that as a fighting force the Tamil Tigers had survived largely intact.

For the guerrillas the loss of Jaffna was, of course, a psychological and logistical blow. Not only had it been a secure base of operations, and a crucial port for resupply, but they had grown accustomed, over the years, to operating in an open, quasi-governmental fashion there, controlling the television and radio stations and the local press.

However, the advantage is shifting to their side again, as a full-fledged guerrilla war takes its toll in the east and the north. Booby traps and mines set by the Tigers, often with the aid of civilians, have made the Indian troops jumpy and confused, and they patrol in a perpetual crouch to avoid sniper fire. The soldiers have shot and killed civilians—sometimes intentionally, sometimes not. According to lawyers and human-rights activists, there is strong evidence of widespread atrocities by the Indian troops in Jaffna and the east. They have reportedly raped women and pillaged homes and shops. (On December 15th, a Sri Lankan court found six Indian soldiers guilty of raping Tamil women during house-to-house searches in the north.)

In the south, militant Sinhalese organizations, led by the J.V.P., have been responsible for an upsurge of violence, including robbery and murder, that is directed against the Jayewardene government. The President himself survived an assassination attempt in August—when an assailant exploded grenades and sprayed machine-gun fire in the parliament building—and most of his ministers and members of parliament are under heavy-armed guard; a thirty-thousand-man private defense militia is being established to protect them. Most members of parliament who belong to the ruling party stay hidden away in Colombo, not daring to return to their constituencies. By the end of last year, one middle- or lower-ranking party or government official had been killed somewhere in the country almost every day since the peace accord was signed.

WHEN I returned to Colombo a few weeks ago, I had no sooner got into my car at the airport than my driver, Kawi, began, "It's awful, Madam. Horrible! How many killings? How many bombs? People don't have time to discuss the north and the east any longer. They're too worried about what's happening here in the south."

The road from the airport to the city was hung with mourning flags, and inside the capital's principal art gallery the body of Vijaya Kumaranatunga lay in state. He was Sri Lanka's most popular film star and a socialist politician, and had become a cult figure among the young. He had been gunned down outside his residence, presumably by Sinhalese extremists, and on the day of his funeral Colombo was paralyzed. More than a million people had come in buses and trucks from all over the country to file past his flower-strewn body and pay their respects; among the mourners were students and teachers, Cabinet ministers and monks, President Jayewardene, and a six-member delegation from the Tamil Tigers, who had arrived under the cover of darkness the previous night. To many, the killing of Kumaranatunga had become a symbol of the senseless, uncontrollable violence that had taken over.

Eight months after the Gandhi-Jayewardene accord, the agreement is in tatters, and in the east and north more than sixty thousand Indian "peacekeepers" are occupying a fourth of Sri Lanka's countryside. And in the face of a vengeful guerrilla army, an increasingly hostile civilian population, and a peace agreement that has brought none of its promised rewards, India's peacekeeping operation shows every sign of becoming a painful long-term occupation—one that invites comparison not just with Ulster but with Vietnam and Afghanistan. Indian forces are bogged down in a foreign country, fighting a counter-insurgency war they cannot hope to win.

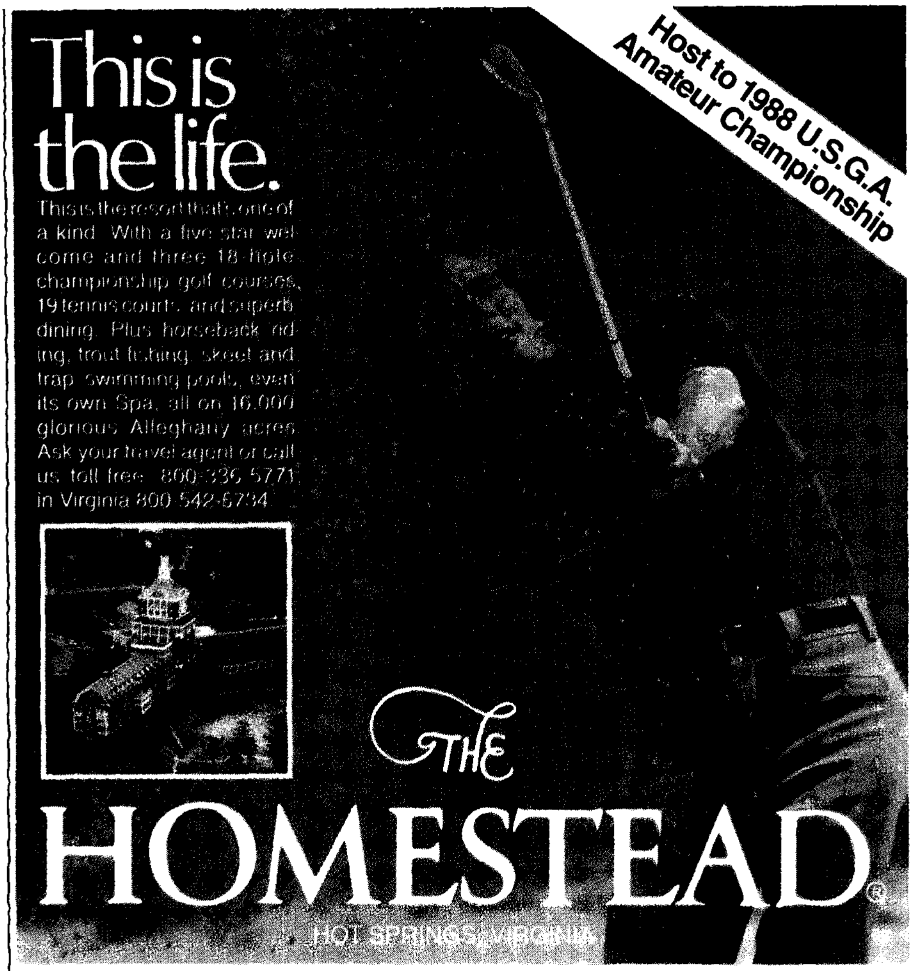
Throughout Sri Lanka, there is a feeling of irresolution and drift, and the popularity of President Jayewardene is again very low. He will complete his second Presidential term in February, 1989, and is perceived increasingly as both victim and symbol of Sri Lanka's war. Normally a politician of extraordinary skill, he gambled his future on India and, at least for the moment, has lost. Thus, as he has done so many times before, Jayewardene has retreated behind his enigmatic veil.

There is anger and incomprehension among many Sinhalese over the Jayewardene government's having effectively surrendered control over the Northern and Eastern Provinces to the Indian Peace-Keeping Force. This, coupled with Sri Lanka's endless violence (including the incipient insurrection in the Sinhalese south, which has tied up fifty thousand troops of the Sri Lankan security forces), has fuelled popular demands for early parliamentary elections; the term of the present parliament extends through the summer of 1989.

Many, perhaps most, Sri Lankans—Tamils and Sinhalese alike—are increasingly apprehensive about the very survival of their country as a unified state. Apparently unsure of his own mind, President Jayewardene has said that there will be no voting in the Northern and Eastern Provinces until peace is achieved, and the next moment, with intelligence reports of atrocities piling up on his desk, he has said that the provincial-council elections called for by the peace accord could be held between April and June this year (they were to have been held by December 31, 1987, at the latest). Although the accord was ratified by the Sri Lankan parliament in November, none of its major provisions have thus far been carried out.

For the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (which is costing New Delhi more than three million dollars a day), it is a matter of face and honor that the provincial polls be held—after which, at least technically, some of the unhappy peacekeepers would be eligible to go home. But no one, including the Indians, is under any illusion about the difficulties of holding them. It will be impossible to have peaceful elections unless the Tamil Tigers and the J.V.P. bless the polls, and a new wave of large-scale violence could be precipitated when a hundred and twenty-five thousand Tamil refugees in India are repatriated and find that Sinhalese are now occupying their former homes.

The conflict in Sri Lanka—independent India's longest war—is rapidly becoming an embarrassment for



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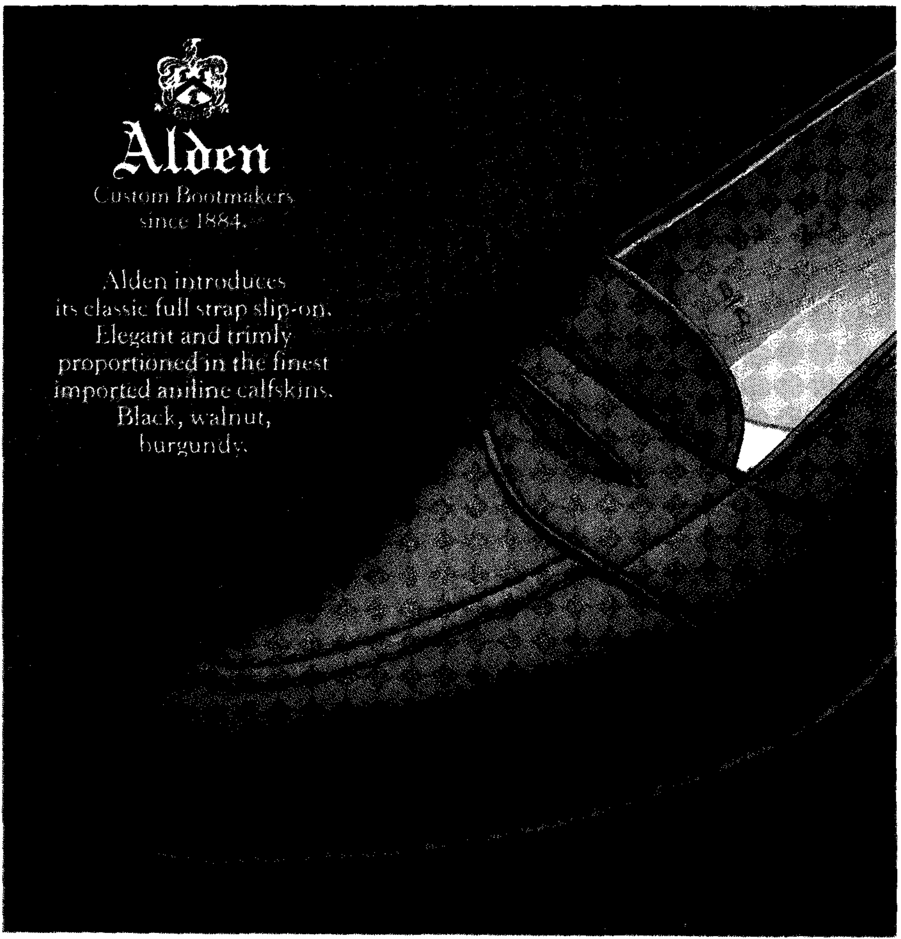

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Rajiv Gandhi, who already has a long list of political problems at home, but he dismisses the growing criticism in the Indian press and parliament as the Indian death toll mounts, and insists that Sri Lanka is not becoming India's Vietnam. Indian flags now fly throughout the north and east, and those areas are blanketed with Indian Army checkpoints and small Army camps, yet thus far the Indians have been unable to intercept the vessels plying the east coast which ferry to the Tigers ammunition and weapons, now most often from Singapore.

Mani Dixit is being cynically referred to as the Viceroy by the Sri Lankan élite, and, to my astonishment, Sinhalese friends have spoken to me proudly of how "the lad" Velupillai Prabakaran kept the Indian Army out of Jaffna for more than two weeks. Ironically, the rising tide of criticism of the tactics and behavior of the Indian troops has at last brought Sinhalese and Tamils to a consensus—the Indian "peacekeepers" must go home. "The depth of the ethnic divide remains," Dr. Kingsley de Silva, Sri Lanka's preëminent historian, told me over lunch. He is a good-humored, white-haired Sinhalese moderate. "It cannot be bridged in a hurry. But this consensus now exists. The Sinhalese resentment of India has always been there, and what happened when the Indian troops arrived in the north was that the Indians saw Jaffna, and the people of Jaffna saw the Indians, and neither liked the other very much."

Dr. de Silva, who is Jayewardene's biographer, supported the President when he signed the peace accord. "In retrospect, what went wrong?" I asked him.

"The President is normally a very clever politician, but he severely underestimated the depth of Sinhalese opposition to any deal with India," de Silva said. "He also seriously overestimated the influence that India could exert on the Tamil Tigers to get them to lay down their arms. But I think something good will come out of this. There is now a realization among the Tamils that they have to look south, to Colombo, instead of north, to India. Also, I think there's a realization in the Sri Lankan government that the Tamil Tigers, defanged, would be a better bet to negotiate a political settlement with than any other group in the country, including the Indians."

Shortly after my lunch with Dr. de Silva, Sri Lankan government officials let it be known that they had received "several signals" in recent weeks that the Tigers were interested in opening talks. Two government ministers, Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake, the Minister of Lands, were attempting to initiate such talks.

Dixit is far less optimistic. When I visited him recently at the Indian High Commission in Colombo and asked about a possible timetable for the withdrawal of Indian troops, he replied, "Any timetable is speculative at this point. It is a highly volatile situation. And if Sri Lanka insists on the premature withdrawal of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, Sri Lanka will be divided. I say this because it is having a great deal of trouble with the J.V.P. in the south, and the L.T.T.E."—the Tamil Tigers—"are not fully subdued in the north and east." When I brought up the possibility of direct talks between the Tigers and the Sri Lankan government, Dixit said, "I'm not certain these talks will take place. There is a firm understanding between my Prime Minister and President Jayewardene that no arrangements will be made without India's involvement and In-

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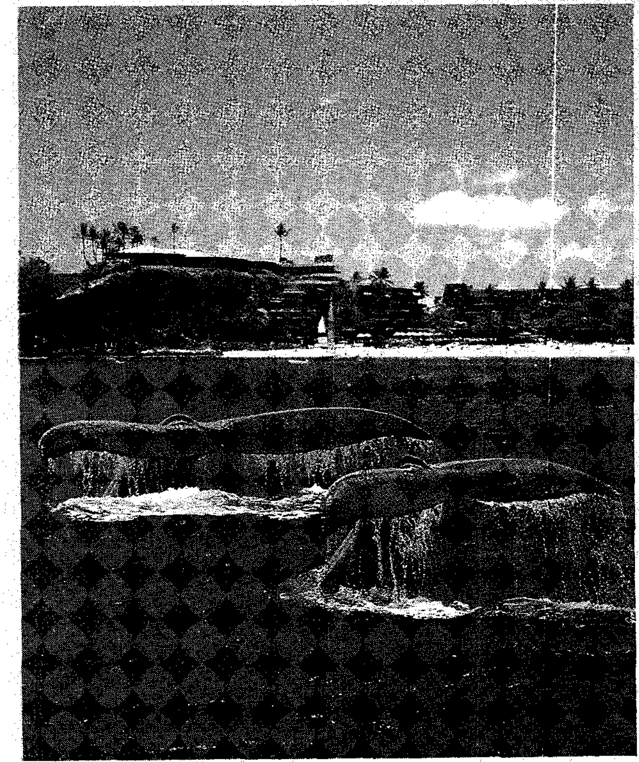

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dia's advice." He went on to say that he, too, had been receiving overtures from the Tigers in recent weeks, indicating that the Tigers want a ceasefire and want to open talks. "But we're not sure of their motives," Dixit said. "And this time we want to be very, very sure that they really want to talk, and that this is not just a tactical move."

ALL that I had heard about Jayewardene in recent weeks led me to expect to encounter a disillusioned man when I went to see him, at the old parliament building—a relic of the Raj—in the last week of February. He doesn't take pressure well, I had been told, and tends to withdraw into himself. Despite his great intelligence, acumen, and skill, it was also being said, he was becoming increasingly idiosyncratic and bizarre, and age was beginning to tell. In November, he told a journalist from the Madras *Hindu*, "About Jaffna I must say that I am rather ignorant, although we have people coming and telling us about the situation." Some people in Colombo were saying that Jayewardene had been greatly depressed by a strange incident that occurred last summer. On June 11th, one of Buddhism's most sacred days, the President, accompanied by ministers and aides, went to the sacred ancient capital of Anuradhapura for the blessing of a reconstructed stupa built by Dutugemunu, one of Sinhala's most revered kings. As the monks, outside the stupa, began their solemn blessing, part of its wall collapsed. Interpreting the event as a most inauspicious sign, Jayewardene turned pale and quickly left the ceremony. On returning to Colombo, he ordered that no mention of the collapse of the stupa be made in the Sri Lankan press.

The security at the old parliament building at the time of my visit was unprecedented. My purse and my briefcase were checked by hand twice in the reception area, and the foyer bristled with electronic equipment and metal scans. I was politely asked to leave my purse behind, and take only my notebook and pen. I was then escorted into the private office of the President.

As he greeted me and offered me orange juice, I was taken aback, for his manner was ebullient. Age has weakened his hearing, and noise from the explosions during the August assassination attempt damaged it further, but he now had a new hearing aid, and, at eighty-one, he looked younger and better than he had in years. It became clear as he spoke that he was still far more politically adept than his sometimes odd public statements would suggest.

I asked President Jayewardene if he was having second thoughts about the peace accord.

"Not at all," he said. "I am still convinced that this is the only way to bring Sri Lanka peace."

When did he think that peace would come?

"In the north and east, when the L.T.T.E. surrenders. And when that happens, even if terrorism still continues throughout the island, I'll be entitled to say, 'There is peace in Sri Lanka,' because terrorism in the modern world cannot be totally eliminated."

"Does that mean that Sri Lanka will never be as it was before—that terrorism will always be a factor?" I asked.

He frowned and shrugged. "That's the modern world," he said.

Would he agree to direct talks between his government and the Tamil Tigers?

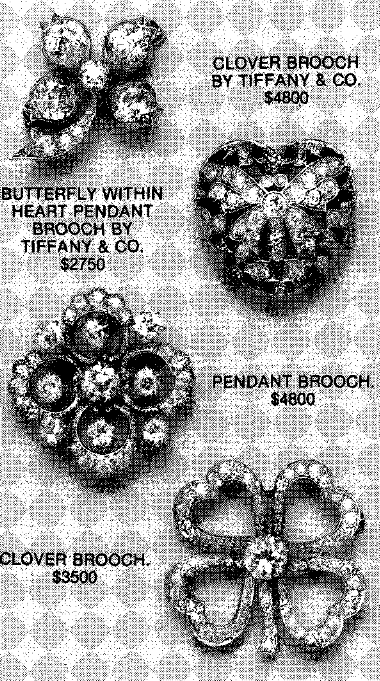
"No," he said. He thought a bit, and added, "Yes, if three conditions are met. If they accept the peace agreement, surrender their arms, and give up violence, then, yes, I would agree to direct talks."

A million Sri Lankans, out of a nation of sixteen million, had come to pay their last respects to Vijaya Kumaranatunga, I said. Was this the way Sri Lanka's silent majority was finally protesting the endless bloodshed?

"I hope so. I truly hope so." For the first time during our interview, the President looked tired. "Perhaps the death of one man can bring reason—reason that has escaped us for so many years."

"The anti-Indian feeling sweeping Sri Lanka is extremely high," I said. "My Sinhalese friends have expressed admiration for the Tamil Tigers for standing up to the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, and my Tamil friends have told me that the Indian Army is ten times worse than the Sri Lankan Army was."

"Well, yes," the President said. "On your second point, the Sri Lankan Army has behaved much better than the Indian Army. But these Sinhalese friends of yours annoy me. Principles should not be changed for political expediency. Don't these peo-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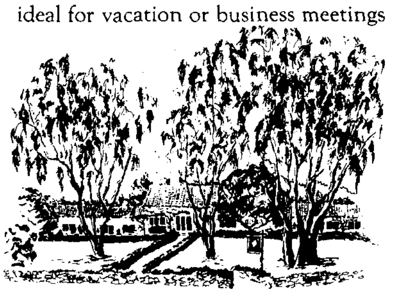
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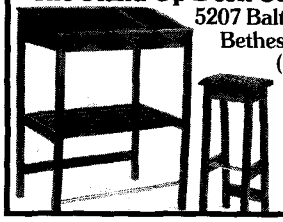
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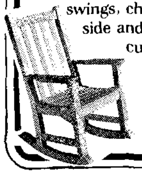

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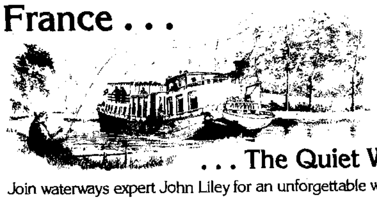

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ple remember that the Tamil Tigers used extreme violence against a democratic government? Principles should not be so easily changed."

I reminded President Jayewardene that he had once told me he was a perennial optimist.

"I still am," he responded cheerfully. "Why shouldn't I be?"

After all that had happened, what was it that fuelled his optimism?

"I don't know what it is," he said. "I don't know enough about the how and why and wherefore. But, my religion, my books . . . I was born a Virgo. And I am still an optimist, despite everything." He smiled, displaying his considerable charm.

When I asked him if he feared assassination, he spoke of the three attempts on his life—in 1958, 1976, and 1987—almost as one removed. "I don't fear death," he told me. "But it's good to be alive—alive and working."

I gently broached the subject of a third Presidential term. It was being strongly rumored that the President would not step down, as scheduled, in February, 1989, even though he would have to amend or disregard the constitution to stay on. I had also heard that he had recently been reading biographies of Konrad Adenauer and Cardinal Fleury, the eighteenth-century French Chief Minister, both of whom ruled through their eighties. At fashionable Colombo dinner parties, the question of what J.R. was planning to do was on everyone's lips. So far, he had maintained a rigid silence on the subject.

"Ah, I wish I knew where I'd be one year from now," Jayewardene said.

"Will you perhaps still be here after February, 1989?" I asked.

"Yes, certainly. I will be here in my present position for some time."

I asked him what, after ten years in office, he considered his greatest achievement.

He laughed, and said, "My greatest achievement is that I'm here."

—MARY ANNE WEAVER

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AMERICAN CHRONICLES

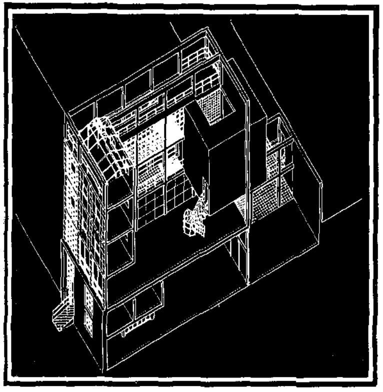
DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

BEFORE there was democracy, there was Judge James J. Comerford. "He was a man of his generation," someone who knew the Judge in his heyday said recently. "Self-assured. Strong-willed. He ruled with an iron hand." The Judge ruled the New York St. Patrick's Day parade, and, like a number of his predecessors, he ruled it well into his eighties. (According to Paul O'Dwyer, the former president of the City Council, parade-committee chairmen have had "an arrangement with the Creator that established longevity.") During the Judge's reign, it is said, the man who was to have the honor of being grand marshal of the parade was not elected but anointed. An election was held, of course. Three delegates from every single organization that had a marching unit in the parade—whether the unit was as grand as the United Irish Counties Association or as simple as a high-school pipe band—had the right to vote for grand marshal, just as every single member of an old-fashioned Democratic clubhouse might have had the right to vote for precinct captain. In both cases, it was customary to present only one candidate. The Judge's choice would be nominated, sometimes by the monsignor who served as chaplain of the parade committee. The Judge would ask if anybody had any other nominations. Nobody would have any other nominations. The Judge's candidate would emerge victorious. Some of the grumblers among the delegates referred to the process as "democracy in action."

They didn't say that in a public meeting. James J. Comerford, Judge of the Criminal Court of New York County, was a man who inspired widespread respect, and almost as widespread fear. He was a stalwart of the Roman Catholic Church and the Regular Democratic Party and the Ancient Order of Hibernians—the fraternal organization that presides over the St. Patrick's Day parade. As a young man in Ireland, he had been wounded while fighting for the Irish Republican Army. He assumed the authority on the platform that he had on the bench of the Criminal Court, and, as he got older, he was capable of dealing with some trifling objection from the floor with a direct order: "Shut up and sit down. The people didn't come to hear you talk."

But Judge Comerford was not a dictator. He was a boss. In their chapter on the Irish in "Beyond the Melting Pot," Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote, "The principle of Boss rule was not tyranny, but order." There was nothing arbitrary about the Judge's decision on who would be grand marshal. This, after all, was the greatest honor the Irish-American community had to offer. The grand marshal would lead the parade up Fifth Avenue. He would stop at St. Patrick's Cathedral to pay his respects and to introduce his aides to the Cardinal. He would, after completing the route, join the mayor and the senators and the other dignitaries on the reviewing stand to take the salute of tens of thousands of his countrymen. The men chosen by the Judge to fulfill these duties were worthy men all. They were selected in a way that spread the honor around his various constituencies—a police commissioner one year, a labor leader the next year, a loyal soldier of the parade committee the year after that—and they were quietly confirmed in advance by a few men of influence. A worthy candidate need only wait his turn, and, in the view of Glazer and Moynihan, the Irish-Americans' "phenomenally effective capacity for political bureaucracy" was based partly on a belief that waiting one's turn was somewhere between necessary and positively virtuous: "The incredible capacity of the rural Irish to remain celibate, awaiting their turn to inherit the farm, was matched by generations of assistant corporation counsels awaiting that opening on the City Court bench." When people who are active in the parade recall Judge Comerford's reign, the phrase of his they most savor is the one he often used when someone mentioned himself as just the sort of public-spirited benefactor of the Irish-American community who should be named grand marshal. The

"We had her declawed, but she's still impossible."



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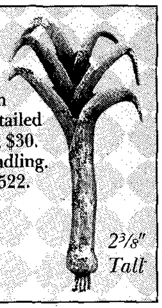

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Judge would fix his eye on the supplicant and say, in a brogue still redolent of County Kilkenny, "It's not your year."

ALL in all, Judge James J. Comerford was not the kind of man one would expect to see bowled over by a tidal wave of democracy. That's what happened, though, in the early eighties. The Judge was getting on in years by then, and he had also given evidence that he was not omnipotent. When Judge Comerford took over as parade-committee chairman, in 1966, the time was passing when a great Irish institution like the St. Patrick's Day parade had so many "friends downtown" that it could simply brush aside the forces of darkness *that constantly conspired against it*—the forces that complained about its interfering with business or tying up midweek traffic. But the Judge, as he often reminded his troops, had continued to stave off the enemies of the parade. He had waved away the Protestant mayor who wanted the parade moved to Central Park ("We told him to go to hell") and fought the powerful Fifth Avenue Association to a standstill. Then, in December of 1981, he announced—suddenly and unilaterally—that the 1982 parade would be held not on March 17th but on the nearest Sunday. It was widely assumed that what the Mayor and the merchants had failed to do had been managed by the Cardinal, who had publicly expressed horror at the "outrageous public behavior" seen on March 17th, mainly among suburban teen-agers who had come to regard St. Patrick's Day in New York as a spring rite of falling-down drunkenness.

The response to the Judge's announcement was hardly the sort of ritualistic confirmation he was accustomed to receiving. He had apparently underestimated his people's allegiance to the Saint's Day itself. ("This is a subculture with its own gods," Paul O'Dwyer has said, "and the St. Patrick's Day parade had become a symbol of that subculture.") The troops rebelled. Some organizations informed the Judge that they had no intention of marching past thin crowds on a Sunday, as if they were in some lesser ethnic event put on by the Germans or the Greeks or the Puerto Ricans. Only six days after the original announcement, the Judge was forced to reverse himself. He did so with his usual swagger. ("It's the only day for the

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New York Irish. Marching on a Sunday is for the villages outside the city.") But, as they say in politics, he had begun to look vulnerable.

Naturally, the issue that actually led to the first democratic election of a grand marshal, a year later, was Northern Ireland. There had never been any doubt about where the parade stood on the question of a united Ireland. Some of the old-timers who served on the parade committee with the Judge dated from the era when many Irish immigrants to this country were diehards who had left Ireland after fighting on the anti-treaty side in the civil war that followed the Irish Rebellion—the war that broke out in 1922 after the new Irish government accepted a treaty that left the six northeastern counties under English control. For many years, the only placard allowed in the New York St. Patrick's Day parade has been "ENGLAND GET OUT OF IRELAND." Still, the Judge and his colleagues had over the years become essentially conservative people. They regarded the parade as nonpolitical, and they didn't want it turned into a forum. In 1983, a time when the I.R.A. hunger strikes had brought emotional involvement in the latest Irish troubles to its peak among Irish-Americans, the Judge's candidate for grand marshal was Al O'Hagan, a prominent Hibernian who works in government liaison for the Brooklyn Union Gas Company. Just about everybody else's candidate, as it turned out, was Michael Flannery, one of the founders of the Irish Northern Aid Committee.

In the words of the *Irish Echo*, the largest of New York's four Irish tabloids, Mike Flannery is "probably the most admired man in the Irish-American community." A contemporary of the Judge's, Flannery had fought as a lad against both the English and the pro-treaty government, and had found nothing in the events of the next sixty or seventy years to change his views on the issues involved. Just a couple of months before the voting for grand marshal, he had been among five members of the Irish Northern Aid Committee, or Noraid, tried for running guns to the Provisional I.R.A. (Attorneys presented any number of persuasive arguments in defense, not including a denial that the defendants had been running guns to the I.R.A., and all five Noraid men were acquitted.) A soft-spoken, self-effacing man who was retired from an office job at Metropolitan Life, Flannery had de-

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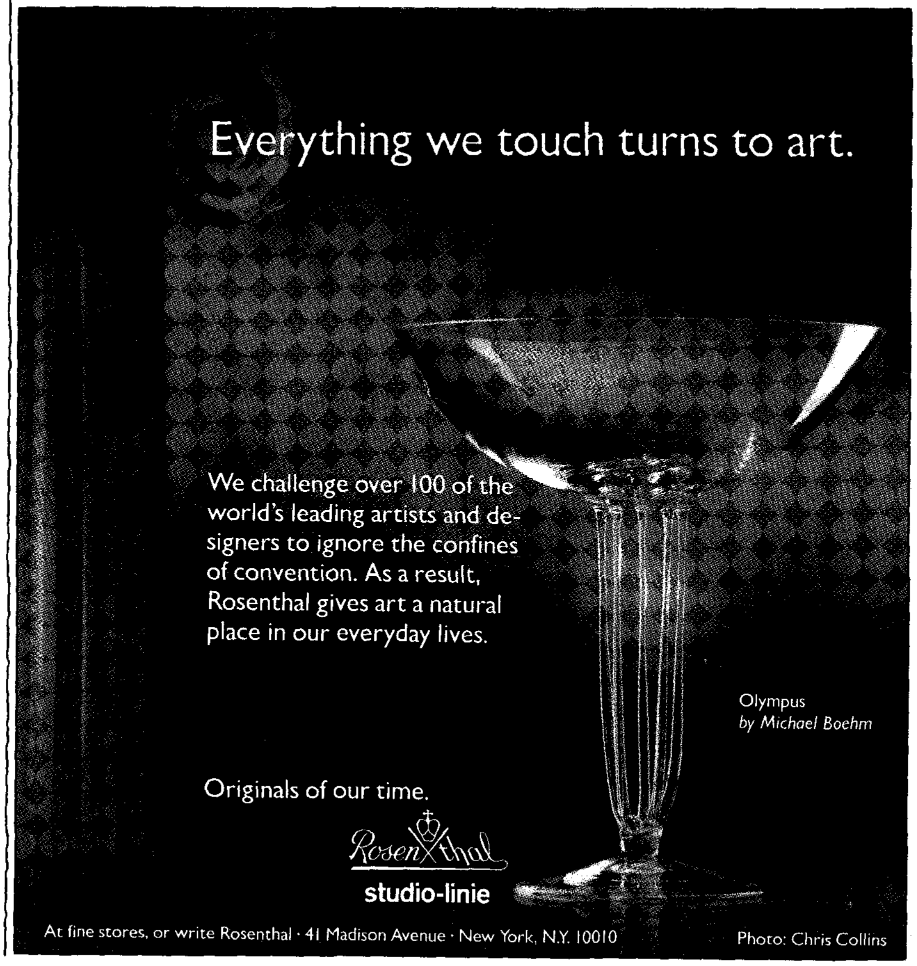

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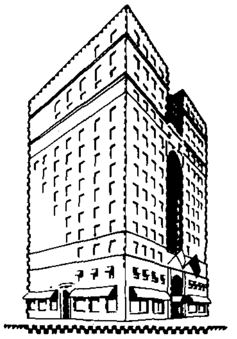

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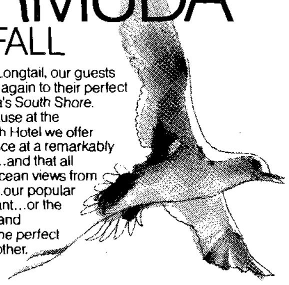

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voted his life to Irish affairs—not just nationalism but the Tipperary Men's Association and the Irish Institute and the United Irish Counties Association and, particularly, the Gaelic Athletic Association. He was, of course, a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and thus fulfilled the single official prerequisite for being elected grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade. In fact, he had declined the Judge's offer of the grand marshalship a couple of times before. This time, he said he wanted it—for the Cause.

Al O'Hagan showed himself to be a man who can recognize an occasion for graceful withdrawal when he sees one, and by the night of the election one of Flannery's supporters was Judge James J. Comerford. One candidate, a construction man from Brooklyn, remained in the race against Flannery, and was defeated 299 to 5. The election of Flannery touched off a great furor. The government of Ireland, which has taken the position that the people Flannery seeks to arm are what the Irish Prime Minister at the time called a "band of murderers," withdrew its participation from the parade, and so did such prominent Irish-American political figures as Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and former Governor Hugh Carey. The Cardinal did not emerge from St. Patrick's Cathedral for the traditional greeting of the parade until Flannery had passed. Noraid supporters pointed to Flannery's victory as an indication that in the future nobody who was not an outspoken Irish nationalist could be elected grand marshal. What connoisseurs of parade politics saw in Mike Flannery's election, though, was that the days of anointing the grand marshal were over. Judge James J. Comerford, the last of the great bosses, retired from the chairmanship the following year.

In 1984, it was apparent that everything had changed. A number of candidates were nominated—none of them by the parade chaplain. The year after that, the grand marshalship was sought by a woman—Dorothy Hayden Cudahy, who was widely known in the community as the hostess of "Irish Memories," a radio show she had inherited from her father in the forties. There had certainly never been a woman grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade; it had been only two years since women were first allowed on the dais at the grand marshal's installation ceremony, despite the fact that the honor of sitting on the dais was so broadly distributed that, in the words of one installation regular, "they had just about everyone up there but the waiters." Mrs. Cudahy's nomination was rejected by the new chairman, Frank Beirne, a man who had served many years under Judge Comerford. Beirne said that she was ineligible. Although she was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of a Hibernian chapter in Queens, the rules clearly stated that the grand marshal must be a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. In other words, not quite everything had changed.

THE reason that Mike Flannery had thought the Cause could be served by his leading the parade on St. Patrick's Day was summed up by one of his supporters this way: "It's the only day of the year we can get the world to pay attention to the Irish." Before Flannery, the people in charge had treated the grand-marshal election not as a way to put forward someone who symbolized Irish-American priorities but as a way to reward someone who had served the Irish-American community through its duly constituted organizations. There has been a governor here and a police commissioner there, but for the most part the grand marshals of the St. Patrick's Day parade have been people whose distinction was absolutely clear only to someone who attended the same meetings they attended. That in itself is a symbol of Irish-American priorities—particularly when compared with the approach taken by the Italians, whose Columbus Day parade is the only other ethnic event that can command Fifth Avenue on a business day. In selecting their grand marshals, the Italians go straight for glory, no questions asked. In 1979, when the grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade was John Sweeney, then the president of a union local that represented building cleaners, the grand marshal of the Columbus Day parade was Frank Sinatra. In 1980, the Irish had William Burke, a Transit Authority employee who had been executive secretary of the parade committee for many years; the Italians had Luciano Pavarotti. The Columbus Day parade is regularly led up Fifth Avenue by such celebrated Italian-Americans as Yogi Berra and Lee Iacocca. In 1983, the year Judge Comerford had planned to bestow the St. Patrick's Day honor on Al O'Hagan, of the

Brooklyn Union Gas Company, the Italians selected Sophia Loren.

In a grand-marshal-nominating speech this year, Judge John Collins, of the Bronx Criminal Court, said that in the old days the message the Irish meant to send to the establishment on St. Patrick's Day was "Despite your religious and racial prejudice toward us, this is what we Irish have accomplished: we are good citizens and proud of it." That was accompanied, of course, by a fear that people still afflicted with such prejudice would never think of the Irish as good citizens, and would be looking for any excuse to label any St. Patrick's Day event an Irish brawl. Traditionally, the St. Patrick's Day parade committee went further than the sponsors of other ethnic parades in maintaining discipline among the marchers. When the Cardinal's criticism brought home the fact that St. Patrick's Day had come to be associated with, of all things, rowdy drunks, the Irish tightened whatever laxity had crept into the line of march and used the muscle they still had in the city to insist on a police crackdown. Teen-agers who arrived in the city that March 17th with their usual St. Patrick's Day beer supply had it confiscated before they could get out of the train station.

But even a March 17th of unprecedented decorum wouldn't pass without some imprecations against the Irish. A lot of New Yorkers who think of themselves as people of unshakable tolerance take a sort of easement when it comes to the Irish, and their nastiest opinions tend to rise to the surface on St. Patrick's Day. "St. Patrick's Day in New York!" a character in William Styron's "Set This House on Fire" says. "Christalmighty! A whole city at the mercy of a bunch of garbage collectors and bartenders." The New York St. Patrick's Day parade has been held in one form or another for two hundred years—it's an American invention; in Ireland, March 17th is observed as a non-festive holy day of obligation—and in that time it has grown to a size that almost guarantees a certain amount of irritation. It's not unusual to have a million people on the street as spectators, and there often seem to be at least a million others in the bars. The marchers themselves can equal the population of a middle-sized city—so many of them that it can take six hours for the parade to pass a single point. "On a sunny day, we'll march as many as a hundred and twenty thousand people," someone long connected with the parade said recently. "We think it's the biggest parade in the world. Someone said that the May Day parade in Moscow might be bigger, but, of course, we don't march tanks." Nobody blames the Italians or the Greeks for having a parade, but venom seems to rise at the sight of so many Irishmen marching up Fifth Avenue, wearing their County Association sashes and playing their pipes and carrying their banners about the English oppressors. In a country that has assimilated so many Irish for so long—a country where one out of five citizens has some Irish ancestry, a country where people with names like Robert McNamara and Ronald Reagan and Sandra Day O'Connor are thought of as mainstream Americans, a country where most people with Irish names think of a strong Republican as somebody like Robert Dole rather than somebody like Eamon de Valera—there are those who find it irritating that some people remain so willfully, maddeningly *Irish.*

The reason that a lot of them seem so Irish, as it happens, is that they're from Ireland. Although most Americans think of Irish immigration in connection with the potato famine of the eighteen-fifties, the last great wave of Irish migration to the United States was in the nineteen-fifties—from the end of the Second World War to the immigration-law changes in the sixties that ended favored treatment for the countries of Northern Europe and the British Isles. The marchers on Fifth Avenue every March 17th obviously include a lot of native-born Americans whose Irishness comes out once a year. Irish burghers join the Ancient Order of Hibernians—which until recently required its members to be "practicing Catholics"—the way their neighbors might join the Masons or the Odd Fellows. After the Second World War, Emerald Societies grew up in institutions like the Police Department, more or less as a way of looking after Irish interests—before the war, an organization of Irish policemen in New York might have resembled a committee of the whole—and an Irish policeman might join the Department's Emerald Society as routinely as an Italian policeman would join the Columbian Society. But the people active in the County Kilkenny Association, the people who organize the Irish football league for the Gaelic Athletic Association, the people who stand for office in the Hibernian chapters, the people who run organizations like the St. Patrick's Day parade committee tend to be immigrants or sons and daughters of immigrants. It's axiomatic among Irish-Americans that most of the third generation disappears into non-ethnic America. The parade committee has simply passed from the hands of the twenties immigrants to the fifties immigrants. Frank Beirne, the retired bus dispatcher who now serves as chairman of the parade committee, is twenty-five years Judge Comerford's junior, but his brogue is slightly thicker.

"JUST what is the Ladies Auxiliary part of—B'nai B'rith or the Daughters of Italy?" the *Irish Echo* wrote in 1985 in response to Beirne's ruling that Dorothy Hayden Cudahy was not a bona-fide member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The issue was put to rest at the national convention of the Hibernians: the delegates voted to change the auxiliaries into A.O.H. chapters for women. The nomination of Mrs. Cudahy for grand marshal was accepted in 1986. By that time, the election process would have been unrecognizable to someone accustomed to Judge Comerford's democracy in action. Without the Judge's guiding hand, it turned out, all sorts of people had ideas about who should be grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade. In 1984, the year after the Flannery election swept away the boss system, some people from the longshoremen's union had realized that the grand marshalship was there for the taking by any group that could put together an effective campaign for a respected candidate—even a candidate who might not have attended enough officer installations and Gaelic festivals to impress Judge Comerford. The candidate they had in mind, not surprisingly, was their boss, Teddy Gleason, then the president of the International Longshoremen's Association.

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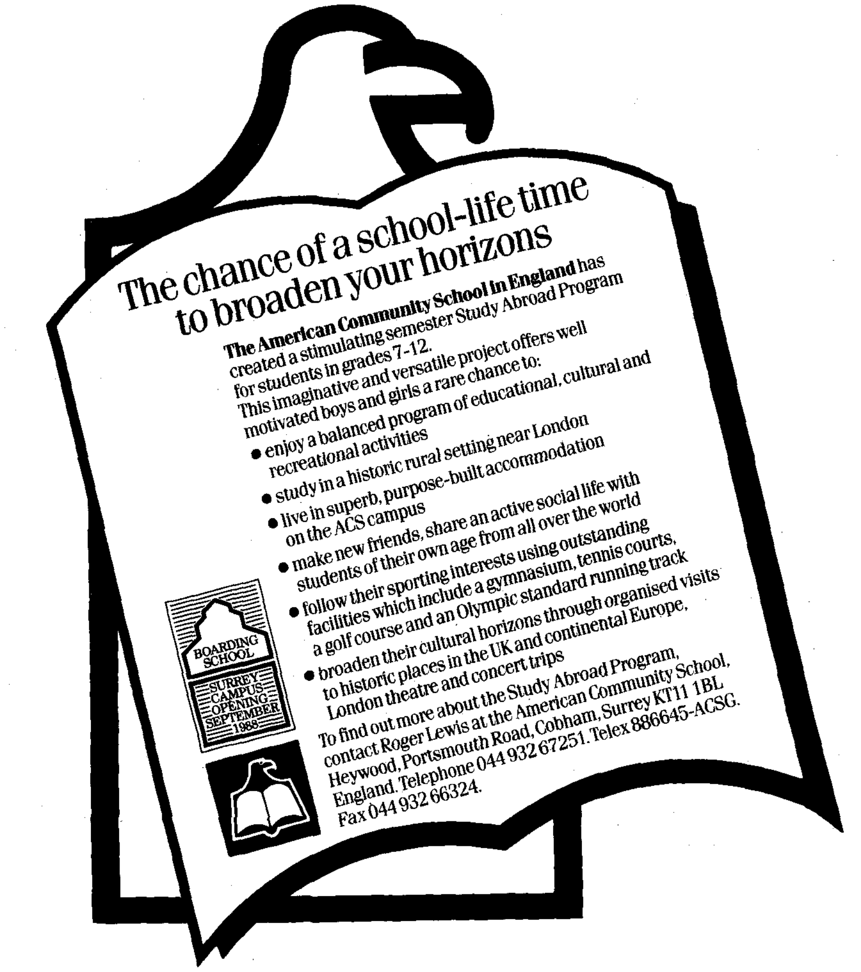

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people acknowledged to have a genius for politics. It's not that there's a problem figuring out where most of the votes are. The Hibernians, with marching units from chapters all over the metropolitan area, have more delegates than any other organization, and they are also considered more likely to show up on election night. Emerald Societies, which have now spread from institutions like the Police Department to institutions like the Transit Authority and the phone company and Consolidated Edison, have a lot of delegates, and so do the various county associations. Of course, a delegate might belong to two or three different organizations and also feel a strong association with something outside any organization at all—the Cause, for instance, or organized labor. Even assuming institutional loyalty, why should the delegates from, say, the Emerald Society of the United States Customs Service or a Hibernian chapter in Yonkers—not to speak of the marching band of Cardinal Hayes High School—cast their votes for one candidate rather than another? A grand-marshal candidate, after all, has no patronage to dispense; he doesn't even choose the aides who march with him at the head of the parade. He can hardly claim that on the strength of his record he is likely to do the job better than his opponents, since the job consists of walking up Fifth Avenue once.

As the longshoremen demonstrated, though, endorsements can be won. Pledges can be gathered. There are reminders of old loyalties and promises of future alliances. There are connections from counties like Nassau and counties like Tipperary. An Emerald Society may back a candidate because it has been asked to by an influential Emerald, or because the candidate came out in the snow for its installation of officers, or because the candidate's father was a cop. The people backing Teddy Gleason in 1984 began to round up delegates as they might for a Democratic National Convention. They ran full-page ads in the *Irish Echo* listing endorsements from Hibernian chapters and county associations and Emerald Societies and more labor organizations than anyone thought existed. They even leaked some endorsements to the *Daily News*. They won easily. The following year, the hard-liners on Northern Ireland were determined to elect one of the people who had lost to Gleason—Peter King, a Queens politician with

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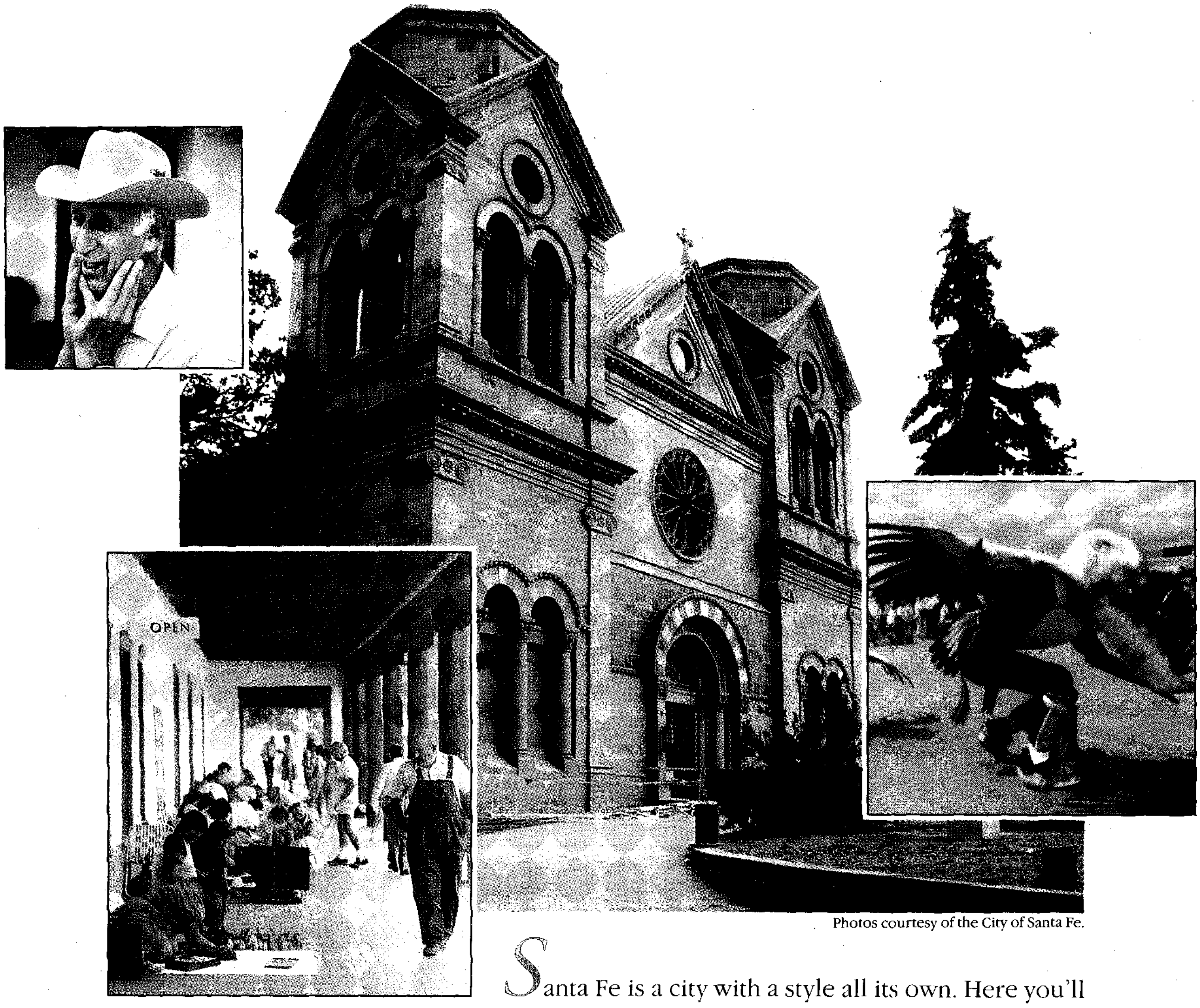

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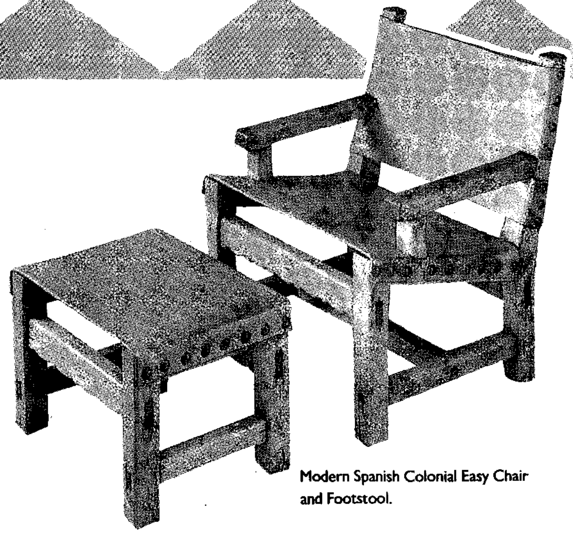

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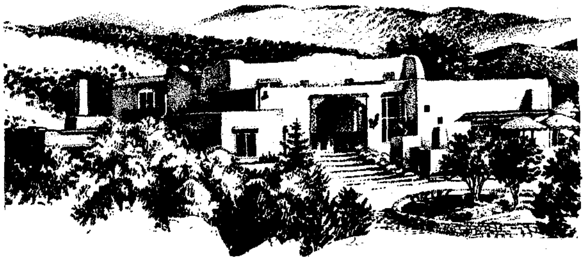

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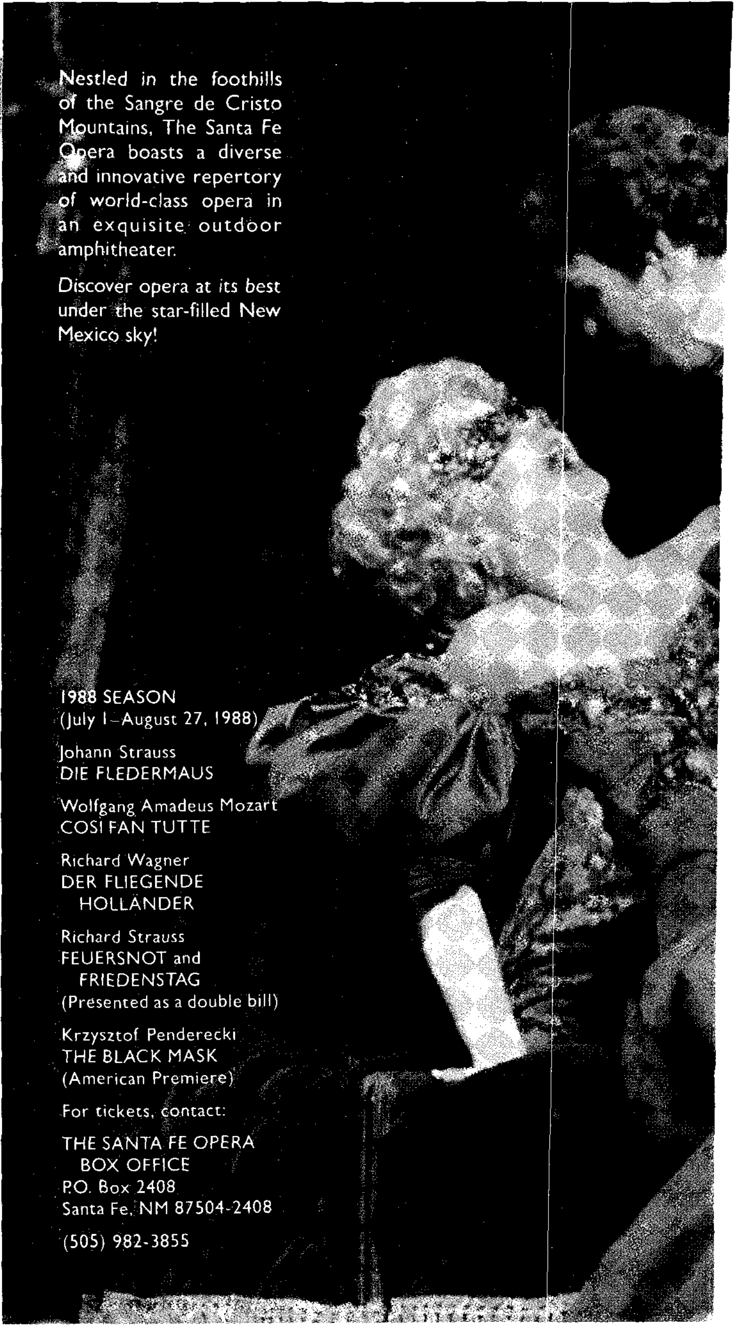

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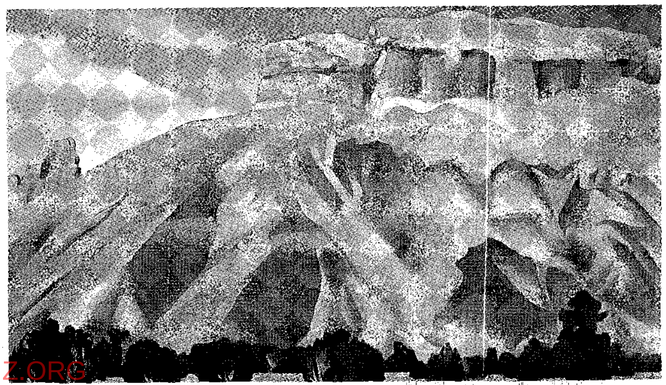
Georgia O'Keeffe, Part of the Cliffs. Oil on Canvas, 20 x 32 inches. Dated 1937.



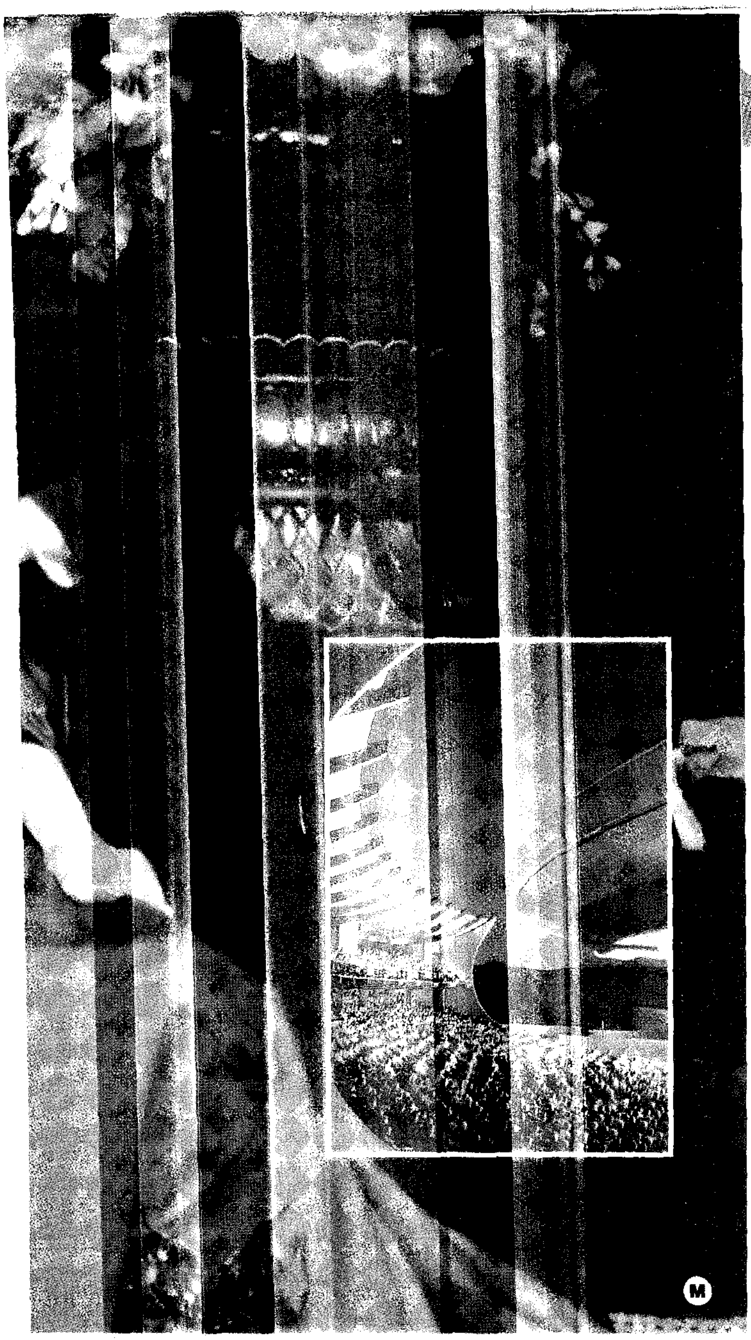
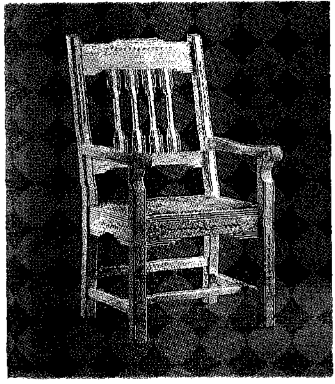


Photo courtesy of the Santa Fe Opera.



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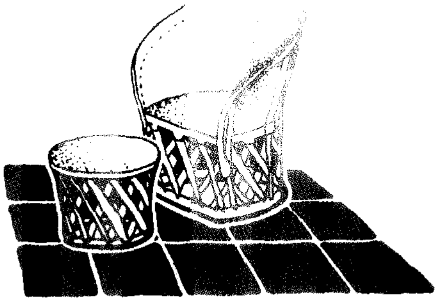

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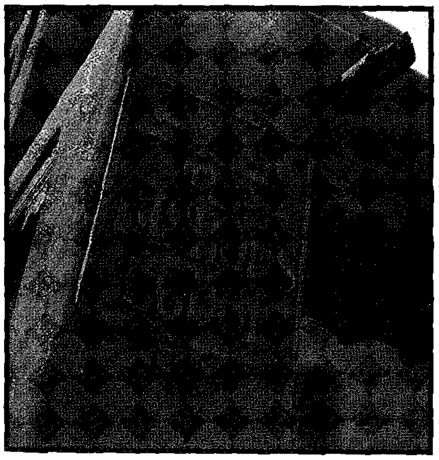

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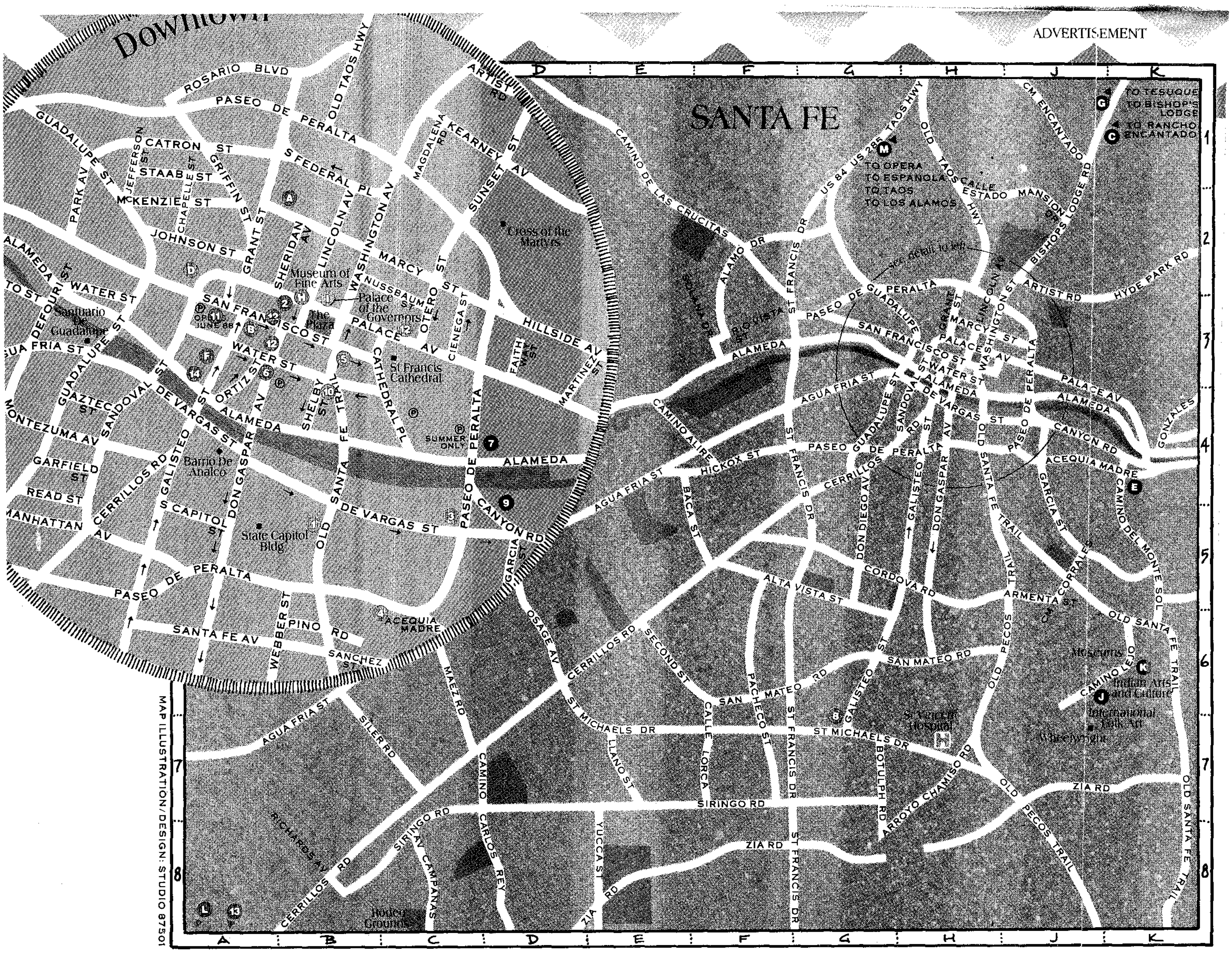
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MAGDALENA RD
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SUNSET ST
PARK AV
McKENZIE ST
JOHNSON ST
GRANT ST
SHERIDAN AV
LINCOLN AV
WASHINGTON AV
Cross of the Martyrs
MARCY ST
OTERO ST
ALAMEDA ST
WATER ST
DEFOURI ST
Santuario de Guadalupe
Museum of Fine Arts
Palace of the Governors
The Plaza
SAN FRANCISCO ST
NUSSBAUM ST
PALACE AV
HILLSIDE AV
CIENEGA ST
OPEN JUNE 87
AGUA FRIA ST
ORTIZ ST
SHELBY ST
CATHEDRAL PL
St Francis Cathedral
FAITH WAY
MARTINEZ ST
MONTEZUMA AV
AZTEC ST
SANDOVAL ST
DE VARGAS ST
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MANHATTAN AV
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S CAPITOL ST
DON GASPAR AV
State Capitol Bldg
PASEO DE PERALTA
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Indian Arts and Culture
International Folk Art
Wheelwright
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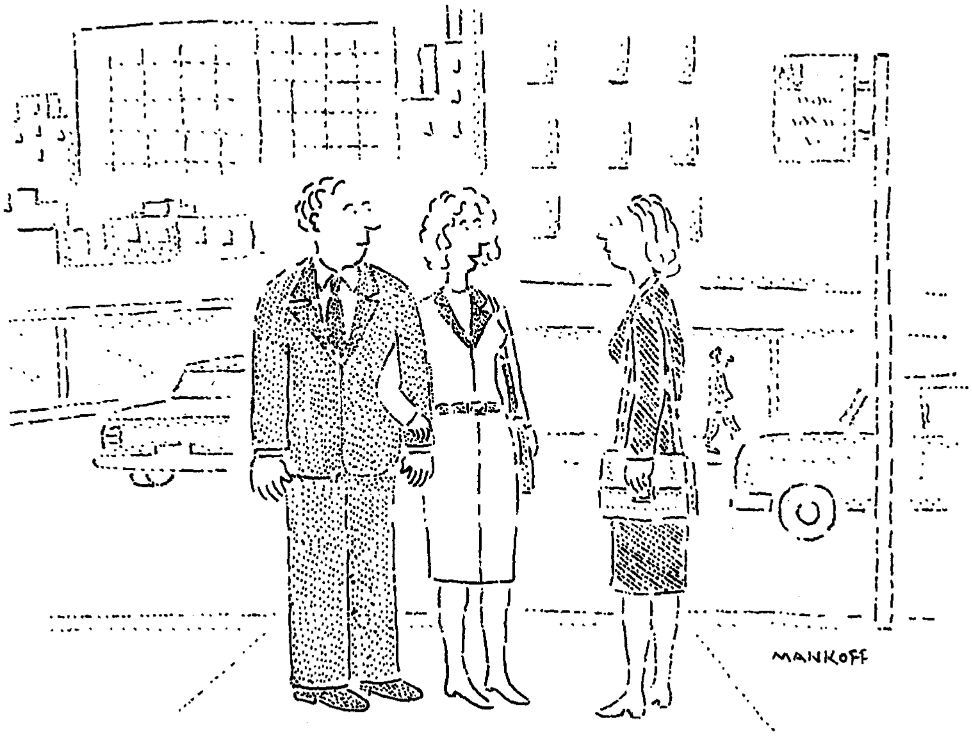
strong ties to the I.R.A. King's ads in 1984 had said his election would "send the right message." He had endorsements not just from Mike Flannery but from the family of the martyred hunger striker Bobby Sands. In 1985, he ran a high-powered campaign—it was said he used professional pollsters—and he won.

By 1986, even some of the people who had grumbled about Judge Comerford's ways were beginning to wonder whether democracy might have its limitations as a method of selecting a grand marshal. Was it really a good idea for candidates to launch advertising campaigns for what was supposed to be an honor bestowed by the community? Was it healthy for the parade to be used by people—the nationalist hard-liners, for instance—who had an agenda of their own? Should the delegates have to choose among half a dozen candidates? According to Flannery, "The present chairman said to me, 'Well, Mike, you started something, all right. There's people now trying to get themselves nominated just to get their name in the paper.' "



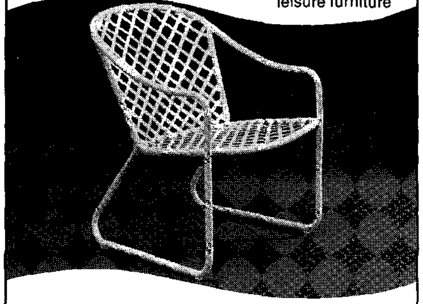
"This is Dave, my friend plus."

• •

And where did this sort of free-for-all leave someone like Al O'Hagan? The man who had withdrawn in the face of the Flannery tidal wave in 1983—the man known to some as Mr. Hibernian—had finished second to both Gleason and King. Jack Irwin, a former New York state president of the A.O.H., became the leader of a campaign to make 1986, the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the Hibernians, Al O'Hagan's year. It was a quieter campaign in 1986—or, to put it another way, a more orderly campaign. No one objected when the chairman of the parade committee let it be known that advertisements supporting candidates for the office of grand marshal should cease. It had been assumed that O'Hagan's principal competition would come from William Burke, the senior vice-president of the Bank of Ireland's New York office (and no relation to the 1980 grand marshal), who had entered the 1985 race late with an expensive flurry of ads. Burke agreed to step aside for O'Hagan. All sorts of influential people—nationalists, traditional parade-committee people, and particularly Hibernians—seemed to agree in advance that Al O'Hagan should be elected at last. He was. He got a hundred and eighty-one votes—fifty-six more than his nearest rival, Dorothy Hayden Cudahy. To outsiders, 1986 was noted as the first year that women ran for grand marshal—Mary Holt Moore, a woman long active in both Irish cultural affairs and the Cause, was also nominated—but to people deeply involved in the politics of the Irish-American subculture it may have been more noteworthy as the year that the revisionists began to creep back into the temple.

"I DO not want to be pushy, but there is no reason to wait," Dorothy Hayden Cudahy had said in 1985 when Frank Beirne suggested that she not attempt to be nominated while the old rules were in effect. No reason to wait! That was not the sort of talk the officers of the parade committee were accustomed to hearing. They were not reformers, after all; they had all served for years under Judge Comerford, waiting their turns to move up in the parade-committee hierarchy. From the beginning, they seemed unhappy with Mrs. Cudahy's candidacy. There were any number of theories to account for their unhappiness. It was said that they thought Mrs. Cudahy's son—Sean Cudahy, a federal Department of Labor employee, who campaigned relentlessly for his mother—was being too pushy. It was said that they blamed Mrs. Cudahy for forcing the issue upon them. It was said that some of them simply didn't want a woman to be grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade. It was said that they resented being portrayed in the press as the sort of people who simply didn't want a woman to be grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade. For whatever reason, the feeling lingered long after the 1985 nomination was rejected that the parade-committee officers were not on Mrs. Cudahy's side.

The press was very much on her side—not just the Irish press but the *Daily News*, which has always had a large Irish readership, and even the *Times*. Feature stories displayed distinctly unthreatening-looking pictures of her sitting in the living room of her bungalow in Queens—an ample, smiling grandmother in her sixties—and carried headlines like "Can a Woman Lead Them?" The *Echo*, which does not back specific candidates, took a strong editorial stand for electing a woman, and the *Times*, taking its first fling at advising its readership on the election for grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade, more or less endorsed Dorothy Hayden Cudahy. The news stories seemed to show her making steady progress. In 1987, the year after she finished fifty-six votes behind Al O'Hagan, Mrs. Cudahy finished only twenty votes behind John Lawe, the leader of the Transport Workers Union. As this year's election approached, it seemed clear that if she



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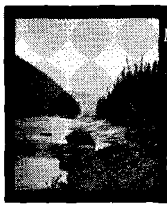

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made a similar improvement in her position she would be the first woman to lead the St. Patrick's Day parade.

That may have been how it looked in the news stories, but that's not how it looked to the people the *Echo* has referred to as "the boys in the know." To the boys in the know, Mrs. Cudahy's success in narrowing the margin of victory in the two previous elections may have seemed less significant than the fact that both winners—Al O'Hagan, a man who works for a utility company, and John Lawe, a labor leader—had been nominated by the same person and had received almost precisely the same number of votes. The nominator with the magic touch was Jack Irwin, the Hibernian leader who had used the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the A.O.H. to gather the forces for O'Hagan. It appeared that Irwin and a few other people had, in effect, taken on the role of keeping order through an old device of the Judge's—passing around the grand marshalship to one constituency at a time. They had backed a strong Hibernian one year, a labor leader the next year, and, as it worked out for 1988, a businessman the year after that. Bill Burke, of the Bank of Ireland, had stepped aside for O'Hagan in 1986. When John Lawe, backed by the Irish American Labor Coalition, decided to run the next year, Burke had stepped aside again. To put it in terms that would be appreciated by Judge Comerford, who has now withdrawn from the fray to the St. Patrick's Home for the Aged and Infirm, in the Bronx, Bill Burke had waited his turn. In 1988, he would be the candidate of an alliance that included Al O'Hagan and Jim McNamara, who is in charge of public relations for both the parade committee and the International Longshoremen's Association. The nominating speech would be delivered by Jack Irwin.

PUBLICLY, the election campaign was not easy to discern. In the world of Irish-American organizations—the Emerald Society dinner dances and the Gaelic Athletic Association award ceremonies and the benefits for families down on their luck—both candidates had, in a way, been campaigning for decades simply by showing up. Like many people who vote in the election for grand marshal, Dorothy Hayden Cudahy has had a life divided between the routine of a city bureaucracy and the small glories of the Irish-American subculture. For twenty-two years, her days belonged to the New York City Department of Transportation—she began as a meter maid—and her evenings were devoted to the Irish Institute or the County Kilkenny Association or Division 14, Ladies A.O.H. of Queens County. Bill Burke hasn't been to as many dinner dances and installations and board meetings and Irish festivals as Mrs. Cudahy, but that's only because he's nearly twenty years younger. She is president of the County Kilkenny Association, and he is president of the County Sligo Association. She has been the Grand Council of Emerald Societies Woman of the Year, and he has been the installing officer of the United Irish Counties. Both of them have strong connections to the mother country. She is the daughter of James Hayden, a County Kilkenny man who made a name for himself on the Irish dance-hall circuit around New York and eventually became the host of the "Irish Memories" show on WEVD—a radio station so receptive to New York's ethnic subcultures that it carries a weekly half hour in Albanian. Burke came here from Tubbercurry, County Sligo, twenty-seven years ago, and his accent is still so thick that when he refers to Mrs. Cudahy by her first name it's easy to get the impression that he's talking about some third candidate named Daugherty.

Issues didn't surface. Although there were undoubtedly delegates who would vote for or against Mrs. Cudahy on the basis of her sex, people were not publicly organized that way. Those delegates who believed that the only question in the grand-marshal election—or in just about any other election, for that matter—was its effect on "the English colonial rule in Ireland" were for Mrs. Cudahy, partly because she had participated in demonstrations for the Cause and partly because Burke's connection with the Bank of Ireland gave him some guilt by association with the government of the Republic of Ireland. ("The choice of a Grand Marshal for New York's St. Patrick's Day parade is always carefully monitored by the British and Dublin," the *Irish People*, a New York tabloid associated with Noraid, said in an editorial supporting Mrs. Cudahy. "Her election would be perceived as a defeat for the British and Free State, as well as a victory for the victims of British rule.") But Mrs. Cudahy has not really been identified strongly enough with the Cause to bring out its forces, and even among

St. Patrick's Day paraders the Northern Ireland issue no longer carries the emotional impact it had around the time of Flannery's election. Although a speaker can still draw applause with a line about a united Ireland, the current American immigration law's effect on Irish immigration may now be a bigger issue than the Cause. Flannery favored Mrs. Cudahy partly because he believed that electing a woman grand marshal was a human-rights issue that should have the support of people concerned with human rights in Ireland, but he also thought Burke was young enough to wait for another year. "Dorothy probably wouldn't like me to say this," Flannery, who is himself eighty-seven, told a visitor a few weeks before the election. "But she's quite a good age." Burke had used the Bank of Ireland's promotion budget so lavishly in support of Irish-American activities—the Gaelic festival here, the Hibernian chapter's project there—that some people grumbled that he was trying to "buy the election" with the bank's money. But that didn't become an issue. It had never occurred to anyone, after all, that the political bosses who used to send around turkeys on Christmas paid for them out of their own pockets.

"It's one delegate at a time," Sean Cudahy said as the election grew near. "With us, it's more of a grass-roots campaign." Mrs. Cudahy was thought to have considerable strength in her home borough of Queens and in the county associations beyond just Kilkenny and Clare, where her husband is the president. Apparently, some of the older members of the county associations are particularly attached to the sort of music played on "Irish Memories"—songs like "My Lovely Rose of Clare" and "The Stone Outside Dan Murphy's Door." On the Burke side, Irwin assigned supervisory responsibility for each of the largest voting blocs, reserving the Hibernians for himself. Burke worked on the county associations, and the Emeralds were approached by Tom Connaughton, an old friend of Burke's who's the president of the Grand Council of United Emerald Societies. A week before the election, Sean Cudahy seemed cautiously optimistic. It was close, he said, but "I think we've turned the corner." Around the same time, Jack Irwin and Bill Burke sat down at the Bank of Ireland to do a count. Going down the list unit by unit, they figured that, counting conservatively, they were a hundred votes

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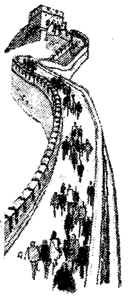

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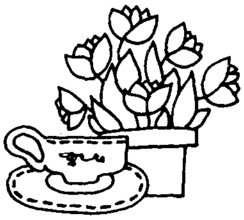

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ahead. Irwin said, "I honestly think that if we lose now it's because we didn't turn our people out."

THE election for the grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade is normally held at the Sheraton Centre Hotel, on the northern edge of the theatre district, and a lot of the strategy sessions are held across the street at a restaurant called Rosie O'Grady's. This year, the votes were cast on a cold Tuesday night in late January. The delegates, crowded into one of the Sheraton's meeting rooms, were mostly middle-aged or older. The Hibernians presumably have the same problem other fraternal organizations have these days in attracting young men—problems that may be compounded by the close association with the Church. Most of the county associations, which were founded basically to assist immigrants, are now shrinking bands of older people. Because of some dismal economic times in Ireland, there have been a good number of immigrants in the past decade, but almost all of them are undocumented; their interest in joining Irish organizations is limited by, among other factors, their disinclination to put their names and addresses on a mailing list.

Before the nomination speeches, Frank Beirne asked Mary Holt Moore—a commanding-looking gray-haired woman who tends to give her speeches partly in Gaelic—to offer a tribute to Sean MacBride, a widely respected jurist and human-rights activist, who had died the previous week in Dublin. Then Jack Irwin placed the name of Bill Burke in nomination, emphasizing Burke's connection with the Hibernians and the Emerald Societies and the county associations and the Gaelic Athletic Association. "Through Bill Burke's encouragement, the Bank of Ireland has offered financial support to scores of Irish-American organizations through the years," Irwin reminded the delegates. The nomination was seconded by, among other people, Al O'Hagan.

In a nominating speech for Dorothy Hayden Cudahy, Judge John Collins said, "Let this be the year for the first woman grand marshal." These days, Collins said, the grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade had an opportunity to send a message beyond simply the traditional display of good citizenship. Through television and through the press, as well as on Fifth Avenue, the grand marshal could "lead a crusade for the minds and hearts of all New Yorkers and all Americans and some in Ireland as well. This parade must stand squarely for the principles of a free, united, thirty-two-county Ireland and a fair U.S. immigration law for the Irish." The chairman of the election committee explained the procedure by which delegates would be called, would mark their ballots, and would drop them into a pasteboard box that had been placed in front of the speakers' platform. It was announced that Frank Beirne would temporarily withhold the vote he had as a parade-committee officer, just in case a tie had to be broken. Then the balloting began.

It took an hour and a half. The delegates lined up in the aisles, waiting to cast their ballots. Two or three election-committee workers called off the names of the various parade units. Mrs. Cudahy bustled around trying to shore up her commitments. ("Don't change your mind.") Jack Irwin sat in the back of the room during much of the voting. Irwin is an affable, businesslike man with snow-white hair—a former child actor who now works for Merrill Lynch. He said he was confident of his count. After the couple of elections that he thinks of as "just chaos," the process is once again orderly enough to permit careful counting. It's true that the grand marshal is no longer anointed but elected—and by secret ballot. Promises can be broken. But Irwin couldn't see any developments that might have altered the picture since he and Burke had done their count a week or so before. There had been a startling development on the actual day of the voting: Sean Cudahy had twice suggested to Bill Burke that he withdraw in Mrs. Cudahy's favor, permitting the first woman grand marshal to be elected and assuring himself the job in 1989. But that had been dismissed by the Burke forces as another example of Sean Cudahy's being overaggressive in his mother's behalf. Irwin hadn't left the turnout of Burke delegates totally to chance. Some of O'Hagan's loyalists from Brooklyn had been delivered by chartered buses.

While the ballots were being counted, reporters and television crews drifted into the room and collected in front of the platform. Then the chairman of the election committee announced the results. Bill Burke had won by more than a hundred and thirty votes. Mrs. Cudahy made a gracious little concession speech, which ended with her hopes for March 17th: "I hope the sun shines all day on Bill Burke." When Burke took the microphone, he said, "It was a tough race. We both campaigned hard for this. That's the democratic way." Later, the reporters who crowded around Burke asked him how he explained the results of the election, and he said, "I laid back for two years." Asked the same question, Frank Beirne said more or less the same thing. The reporters, apparently lacking a well-developed appreciation of the art of waiting your turn, seemed puzzled by the notion of lying back for two years as an effective campaign strategy.

Burke was asked a lot of questions about when there would be a woman grand marshal. He said that the next election would almost certainly be fought among three women, and that he had already committed himself to campaigning for one of them. Although he wouldn't say which one, he did mention Mary Holt Moore as someone who was expected to run. Burke's certainty about an all-female race was a way of saying that those who had restored some order to the process were planning to see to it that a woman—a representative of one more constituency—was elected in 1989. There are people who think that having all women candidates would smack of ladies' night at the lodge hall. There are people who think that some of the parade-committee officers will hold out against a woman as long as possible. But the boys in the know seem to think that if the votes are lined up even the most conservative parade-committee officers will come around. They couldn't have served the Judge for all those years, after all, without absorbing one of the basic lessons of orderly rule: in the long run, the important question is not who the officeholder is but who appears to decide who the officeholder is. "Next year, without a shadow of a doubt, there'll be a woman grand marshal," Burke said to a radio interviewer. What he was telling reporters, in effect, was that women would have their turn. This just hadn't been their year.

—Calvin Trillin

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Experts have again recommended the niddle school gymnasium floor be relaced, but until that time donkeys will be llowed to play basketball games there and hildren may be permitted to tap dance.—*Foundation News, published by the Public School Foundation of Buhl, Idaho.*

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

A Smooth Sail

"MASQUERADE" has a pearly atmosphere of unease. The rich, trustful Olivia Lawrence (Meg Tilly) graduates from Marymount College and returns to the Hamptons, where her mother recently died in an accident; a young hired-hand yachting captain, Tim Whalan (Rob Lowe), who is a practiced seducer, begins to court her. The situation is reminiscent of the courtship of Olivia de Havilland by Montgomery Clift in William Wyler's "The Heiress," and perhaps the name Olivia is a tribute to that film. Tilly's Olivia isn't considered a dull dowd, like Wyler's heroine; this Olivia is lovely, but she's placid and unaffected—she has no sharp edges. And Rob Lowe's Tim Whalan is a shrewd manipulator, a narcissist who knows how to use his every gift. Lowe certainly isn't the actor that Clift was, but you can see why the director, Bob Swaim, might have wanted him in the role: Lowe brings it his boyish prettiness and sexual ambiguity. Olivia isn't frightened of this honey-mouthed charmer. She confuses his self-absorption with unworldliness: she thinks he's like her, and they have the rapport of two people who love sailing. She has her own sloop, Masquerade, which she inherited, along with eight houses and about two hundred million dollars. (She belongs to the old rich; her money has a patina.)

"See anything?"

This is a tranquil, sophisticated thriller: you put it together as it flows past you, and then other pieces fit in when it's over. The script, by Dick Wolf, is crafty and even-toned, and the cinematography, by David Watkin, gives the life of the rich a luxuriance—makes it palpably desirable. The movie was shot in the Hamptons, and the architectural pomposity of the houses recalls the mansions of dullness that Gatsby lusted for, but these romantic undertones are kept down under. The movie has an odd, subterranean pull. Murders take place, but the narrative just keeps unfolding effortlessly, and you're drawn along, wanting to understand the pattern of deceit.

John Glover, who has taken over as the prime rotter of the eighties, is cast as a drunken swine—the last of Olivia's mother's many husbands. A creative comedian, Glover manages to inject some gallows humor into the role: this loathsome stepfather tries to be debonair—it makes him really twisted. Dana Delany makes an effectively quirky impression as his girlfriend, who becomes recklessly suspicious about what's going on. Doug Savant plays the new Hampton Shores police officer; he has known Olivia from childhood and gives indications of having a crush on her. Savant has the kind of young-Tab Hunter looks that actors generally can't do much with, but he has an alertness about him—he has learned how to use his eyes and mouth to convey emotions at odds with that all-American-hero face. Rob Lowe hasn't learned how to use anything; his acting is mush. (His bare-chested scenes would be more effective if he wore a mask to blot out his smarminess.) At the beginning, Tim is the captain of one of two sailboats racing for a championship, and the scenes of his crew of young men under pressure have speed and charge. But Lowe's Tim has no instinctive authority, and when he loses the race and hops into bed with the boa owner's wife (Kim Cattrall) it' hardly adultery—it's just snuggling Lowe brings his role the qualities tha would appeal to Olivia, but he automatically lessens what's at stake in th movie.

Nobody is made out to be conventionally likable, except maybe Olivia You can't be sure about her, becaus Meg Tilly, who had a modern spar in "Tex," is still doing the sleepy, lethargic acting that began when she played the space case in "The Big Chill." She's blandly sincere; maybe that's what Swaim wanted of her, or maybe it's what he had to settle for. She's a little monotonous. (It might have helped if by the end she had come awake.) But at some level her performance works. Olivia has an infinite capacity for love and loyalty, and Tim begins to want to be what she sees in him. So the currents of love and deception run into each other. What makes the movie seductive is its calm surface and conniving, film-noir subtext. It doesn't tell you too much. And almost nothing can be said about what happens in the picture without spoiling it—except that at times it carries suggestions of thrillers such as "Purple Noon" and "Strangers on a Train." It has a sweet malice.

ROMAN POLANSKI'S "Frantic" begins promisingly—that is, with forebodings. Harrison Ford plays a San Francisco heart surgeon who comes to Paris with his wife (Betty Buckley) to speak at a medical conference; they haven't been there since their honeymoon, twenty years earlier. Polanski is a director with guile and wit, and as they arrive at Le Grand Hôtel and go to their room he builds suspense by having us observe every humdrum detail. (What beast is going to spring at us?) First, the two discover that the wife picked up the wrong suitcase at the airport, and then, while the doctor is in the shower, the wife answers the phone and says something to him that he can't hear; he comes out to find she has disappeared. So there he is, an American who doesn't speak French and doesn't know the city, trying to track down his wife, and being condescended to by the police and by the bureaucrats at the American Embassy. But from there on the episodes might have been picked out of a jar by blindfolded writers. (The script is credited to Polanski and Gerard Brach.) The camera stays on the doctor as he folows clues that take him to shops and streets, to a night club (The Blue Parrot, which was the name of Sydney Greenstreet's café in "Casablanca"), o an apartment occupied by a corpse, o the Paris rooftops, and to another night club (A Touch of Class) and involvement with dope dealers and Arab errorists and the childlike, amoral ootsie (Emmanuelle Seigner) whose uitcase got mixed up with his wife's. During all this, the doctor is supposed to be doing dangerous things he has never done before, because of his love for his vanished wife. But what we see is an unhappy, often angry man played by an actor who's concentrating on his role and showing us his fine, strong surgeon's hands. When Ford is Indiana Jones, he's playing on instinct and exhilaration—on all of himself—and we can tune right in to his rascally daring. As the doctor, he's using only the trained-actor part of himself, and it's a joyless, unrevealing performance—he's a lug in a light-gray suit. Since the picture has done nothing to make the wife vivid to us, we don't even share his anxiety about her. All we can think of is the gaping holes in the plot: if the villains lured the wife to the hotel lobby and kidnapped her because they wanted the suitcase, why didn't they tell her to bring it down with her, or just come up and get it? "Frantic" is a misshapen thriller that grinds on without ever being able to compensate for its pathetic plot and its unwritten characters. We seem meant to care about the toots—a painted waif, a child of nature and vice, and all that baloney—but the way she's directed she's too weak a presence to bring it off.

A thriller needs more than an occasional perverse comic undertone; it needs some design, some shapeliness. This picture goes from one location and group of characters to the next, and after a while the episodes become so redundant you may vaguely wonder, Were there only two suitcases?

"SWITCHING CHANNELS"—adapted from "His Girl Friday," the 1940 film version of the 1928 play "The Front Page"—has lost most of the inspired engineering that gave the material its snap. This new picture is often screechy, but it has its own rambunctious, sloppy humor, and the director, Ted Kotcheff—short as he may be on visual invention—has a sense of tempo. Things don't stall. The milieu has been changed from the original one, of Chicago newspaper reporters in the heyday of tabloid journalism, to present-day Chicago and the newsroom of a cable outfit called Satellite Network News. Burt Reynolds is Sully, the news director; Kathleen Turner is Christy, his ex-wife and star reporter; and Christopher Reeve is Blaine, the New York business tycoon she meets on her vacation, who brings her back to Chicago so she can tell Sully she's quitting the news

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game to get married. The original political-corruption plot still survives in vestigial form, with Ned Beatty as the shiny-eyed crooked D.A. who means to win the governorship by executing a convicted cop-killer, and Henry Gibson as the gentle little condemned man who's clinging to life. That's the buzz in the air, and the minor players—George Newbern as Sully's assistant, and several fresh performers from Toronto (where most of the film was shot)—contribute to it. The action centers, though, on Sully's sneaky determination to hang on to Christy, and on his efforts to expose the hulking Blaine—a manufacturer of athletic equipment—as the vain twerp he is.

The attempt to update the plot to the age of television seems half-hearted, and even when the scriptwriter, Jonathan Reynolds, comes up with some satire of TV (as in the sequence of cutting from one TV reporter to another and another and another, all delivering the same vacuous account of a jailbreak) Kotcheff fails to point it up. He does better with the spoofy moments featuring a simpering newswoman (Laura Robinson) known as the Twinkie, and the ones featuring the stentorian voice of Christy's male co-anchor. And Kotcheff achieves a bit of comic-strip style in a series of images of the network's viewers as family groups in the clutter of their homes. But the film's chief virtue is that the actors show a gleaming pleasure in their moments of broad farce. (Maybe Kotcheff is a good audience.)

Ned Beatty's first few appearances here are beauties: he's marvellously piggish. And Henry Gibson turns his stare on us and we feel a frazzled, poetic rapport with him; in the night scene after he escapes, when he's confused and running pell-mell in the darkness outside the jail, his arms and legs seem to be flying away from him. Burt Reynolds, who holds the movie together, reins himself in and shows some of the sly grace that made him appealing a decade ago in "Semi-Tough." He has some nifty gag lines to deliver, and he doesn't milk them—it's almost a modest performance. He looks fit and relaxed; maybe now that he's fifty-two he can depend more on his acting skills and stop pushing his macho image. It may help that next to Christopher Reeve he seems rather small; it's becoming. So is the softness he brings to some of his line readings. When the network owner (Al Waxman) tells him, "Forget the girl; get the story," Reynolds glides into his answer: "The girl *is* the story."

Kathleen Turner is at her most entertaining—and lusty and full-throated—in the beginning, when we see her on the job doing her telecasts, and so overworked she's half hysterical. By the middle, where her scenes are sometimes very close to the ones Rosalind Russell played in "His Girl Friday," Turner doesn't hit quite the right notes. This may be how Kotcheff directed her; in any case, she's gutsy and funny even when she's off tone. You can see her trying; she's game. Turner and Reynolds don't get verbal rhythms going, the way Rosalind Russell and Cary Grant did, and you don't really feel that they belong together, but then this movie is a burlesque and you hardly think in those terms. Sully's jealousy is simply the motor for the comedy. His rival is younger, rich, and taller; Sully turns all three against him. The joker in the cast is Christopher Reeve, in the Ralph Bellamy role as the square, the outsider who doesn't know how the newspeople feel about their work. Reeve's entire performance is slapstick: he's like Clark Kent sexed up. Blaine is so infatuated with the image of himself as a hip, wired man of the world that he dresses romantically in pale blue and yellow, and has his hair colored Mellow Sun Tone. Reeve sustains this foppish stunt, and his jerky, rattled movements are neatly timed. (He survives even such maladroit cheesiness as the shot of him walking on the street in a loose long jacket while a young woman is heard in voice-over exclaiming "Cute buns!")

"Switching Channels" has a dumb title (though it's no worse than "His Girl Friday") and a Michel Legrand score that's just litter on the soundtrack. This is a fairly disreputable movie, but I've seen a lot of reputable ones without anything as purely enjoyable as Ned Beatty mouthing curses while he watches Christy conduct an interview on the box, or as downright silly and good-natured as Reeve crinkling his face in the grin of a goofus.

—PAULINE KAEL

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THE THEATRE

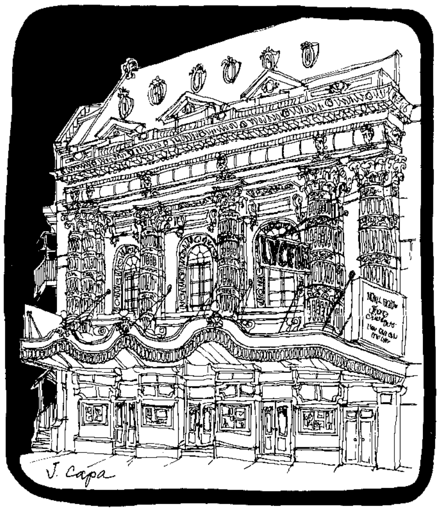
The Unmusical

THE New York City Opera production of Meredith Willson's "The Music Man," at Lincoln Center's New York State Theatre, is a sad failure. Bob Gunton is a versatile and accomplished actor—I've enjoyed watching him in Shakespeare, musical comedy, and contemporary drama. Earlier this season, he even managed to snatch a bit of victory from the jaws of "Roza," in the unlikely role of a prizefighter turned transvestite. So I had hopes for his performance as Professor Harold Hill; at any rate, there were hopes mixed in with whatever fears I had about anyone trying to follow Robert Preston in the role. As it turns out, one's memory of the role-creating star has little to do with one's disappointment in Mr. Gunton and the City Opera revival: he and it fail on their own terms.

Willson's hero is primarily an orator. Talking, not singing, is what he is good at—one reason that it seems odd for an opera company to produce this show. Mr. Gunton's salesman, who is bland and colorless at the best of times—watching him is a little like watching Mister Rogers—is at his worst in spoken dialogue. In song and dance he only lacks lustre; in speech he lacks personality. He seems to be merely going through the motions: trying to imitate the soft-shoe shuffle that Preston made famous, waving his hands around a little. There's no fire, no conviction: it's the movement equivalent of lip-synching. When Preston moved—at least in Morton DaCosta's 1962 movie—he gave the mpression of being unable to stand still: that clearly was the essence of his style. In fact, the *idea* of movement is written into the text: the dull, stolid staging of "Iowa Stubborn"—the song n which the chorus of dull, stolid Midwesterners, declaring their literal-mindedness and lack of imagination, move squarely forward and back en masse—is there to be broken in on by the music man's dynamism and nergy. As Mr. Gunton propels himelf from one place to another on the State Theatre's vast stage, he makes you feel that he'd rather be staying out.

The City Opera has been producng revivals of Broadway musicals for three seasons now—first "Brigadoon," then "South Pacific," and now "The Music Man." Still, it's worth asking why the company chose to revive this particular show. It's one thing for it to produce "Candide"—which originally failed in the commercial arena, despite its wonderfully witty score—or a musical of historical importance (like "South Pacific" or "Sweeney Todd," which, like "Candide," has entered the City Opera repertory). Even somewhat dated shows, like "Brigadoon," have a sort of display-case historical value. But "The Music Man" is not dated. It's not out of commission: it gets produced all the time in schools and dinner theatres across the country. If the City Opera version were respectable—if it offered relief from the crassness and vulgarity of so many Broadway revivals—it would be welcome. Just to have given us a chance to hear unamplified singing would have been an appropriate mission for one of New York's première opera companies. But the City Opera production is as overmiked as anything on Broadway.

Curiously, this revival makes one appreciate the commercial theatre in all its blatant sexiness. It is, after all, sex, in the form of music, that Professor Hill brings to 1912 Iowa. The cleverness of Willson's score lay in its insistence on discovering music in the sounds of everyday life: in commuters talking shop, in women gossiping, in the disposition of four men's voices—even in a librarian's name. A twist on the travelling-salesman joke, "The Music Man" is essentially a morality play—a conflict between salvation and seduction—about the tension between the good-girlism of the musical-comedy heroine and her desire to be seduced. But the matronly Leigh Munro, who plays Marian here, doesn't want to be seduced, any more than Bob Gunton wants to seduce her. When the National Theatre in London staged a revival of "Guys and Dolls," in 1982, it was reorchestrated, clothed in a completely different sound: we went out humming new harmonies. The orchestrations for the current production of "The Music Man" (by Don Walker)—like the set (by David Jenkins) and the choreography (by Marcia Milgrom Dodge)—seem like facsimiles of the orchestrations in the movie, but with the life kicked out of them. The only effect the director, Arthur Masella, has had on "The Music Man" is to desexualize it, to touch it with the dead hand of culture. The mayor's daughter (Jill Powell) has been made to seem more half-witted than prepubescent; the barbershop singing is restrained and tasteful; the juvenile delinquent (Steven M. Schultz) seems more like a candidate for law school than for the reformatory. Moreover, there's no tension between what the Iowans represent and what the salesman represents: the travelling salesman is more of a librarian than the librarian.



Of course, it's obvious why the City Opera is putting on "The Music Man": it is a family show, and suddenly there is an audience for family shows. Granted, audiences (i.e., subscribers) mean funding, but do we really want to see the City Opera turned briefly into an upmarket dinner theatre every year when the ballet closes down for the season? Can we even afford it? Productions like this don't do the public any favors. They only mislead the innocent and confuse the nostalgic: one could attend the City Opera production and leave thinking "The Music Man" a rotten show.
—MIMI KRAMER

•

SENTENCES WE HATED TO COME TO THE END OF

[*Brij Bhardwaj in the New Delhi Hindustan Times*]

Indian Airlines today received messages assuring them that the programme to deliver the planes in time will be maintained, but the assurance cannot be depended upon as it is felt that Germans must have had very good reasons for the decision to cancel the order which itself is unique as never before any operator has changed horses in midstream after selecting an aircraft and engine to power it.

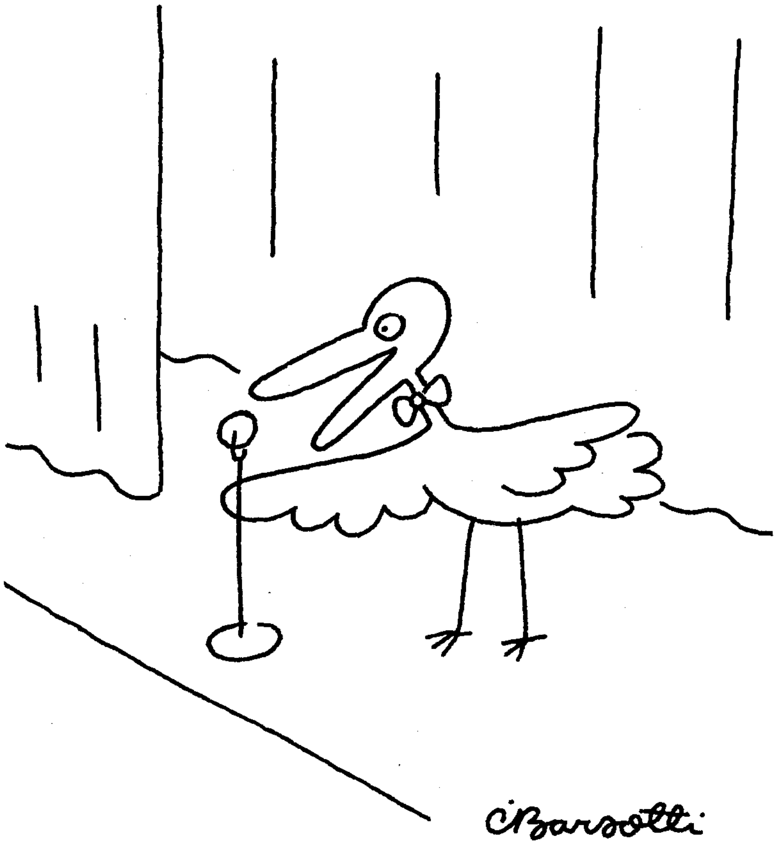
REFLECTIONS

RETHINKING NATIONAL STRATEGY

BY rethinking Soviet global strategy and radically shifting tactics, Mikhail Gorbachev is challenging the United States to reëxamine its own objectives and strategy. The new openings in international politics now being created by his bold approach to Soviet security problems—an effort to repair relations simultaneously with the United States, Europe, China, Japan, and the Muslim nations of the Third World—offer new opportunities and pose new hazards. If the United States continues to fight the Cold War of the nineteen-fifties, it is likely to find itself outflanked and isolated. More important, it will risk missing a historic chance to end the insanity of the arms race and make a start on demilitarizing international relations.

There is also a second reason that developing a new grand design for foreign policy is more critical now than it has been at any time in the last forty years: after fifteen years of slow and erratic economic growth, the domestic costs of the Cold War legacy have become intolerable. For many years, the productive system, the reproductive system (education), and the physical environment, on which all else depends, have been denied needed investments of capital, imagination, and Presidential attention, on the ground that the endless acquisition of weapons and the maintenance of a huge military establishment had a prior claim. The irony is that unexamined national-security policies, designed to protect the people of the United States from foreign coercion and interference, have had the unintended effect of weakening the quality of life in America, constricting the choices of Americans about how to organize and develop their country, and giving non-Americans increasing control over the United States. The overwhelming response to the federal deficit has been to limit expenditures for schools, assistance to needy women and children, environmental protection, preventive health measures, libraries, even police and fire protection, on the theory that in a time of hard choices these have less to do with keeping the United States "strong" than military expenditures.

Over the past forty years, the guardians of the republic have developed a special language in which to talk about the national interest—a language containing words like "threat," "commitment," and "deterrence." Such words gained currency in the early postwar era, when the root assumptions of American Cold War strategy were first embraced. Each word artfully conceals a whole world view, which people unconsciously adopt by using it. Other words, such as "friend," "enemy," or even "nation," though they have been part of the foreign-affairs vocabulary since the beginning of the republic, no longer have the meanings they had in the prenuclear world. The result is that the language of national security often serves to obscure both what we are protecting and what we are protecting it against. By talking about "national security" as primarily a matter of foreign policy and about the management of the economy as primarily a matter of domestic policy, we neatly hide from ourselves the side effects of our strategies for defending the nation and avoid debate on how to strike a balance between foreign obligations and domestic needs. But the connections between the national-security strategy and the mounting insecurity of Americans are becoming too clear to ignore. The American economy is increasingly tied to a world economy over which the United States exercises progressively less control. We are dependent on non-Americans to finance our budget deficit, which we incur in large measure because of military expenditures, and to lure their money we keep interest rates high. The only way to sell otherwise noncompetitive goods has been to sell them at a discount by devaluing the dollar. Now that America has lost its competitive edge in the world economy, there has been a decline in wages for hundreds of thousands of American workers, because they have exchanged high-paying industrial jobs for lower-paying jobs in the service sector. In consequence, many American families are dropping out of the middle class altogether, as dreams of home ownership, or even affordable housing, recede. Having incurred huge obligations payable in dollars, mostly for defense, and having failed to offer attractive enough goods and services for the holders of dollars, the United States finds that its I.O.U.s are being redeemed for pieces of the nation itself. Some of our richest farmland, choic



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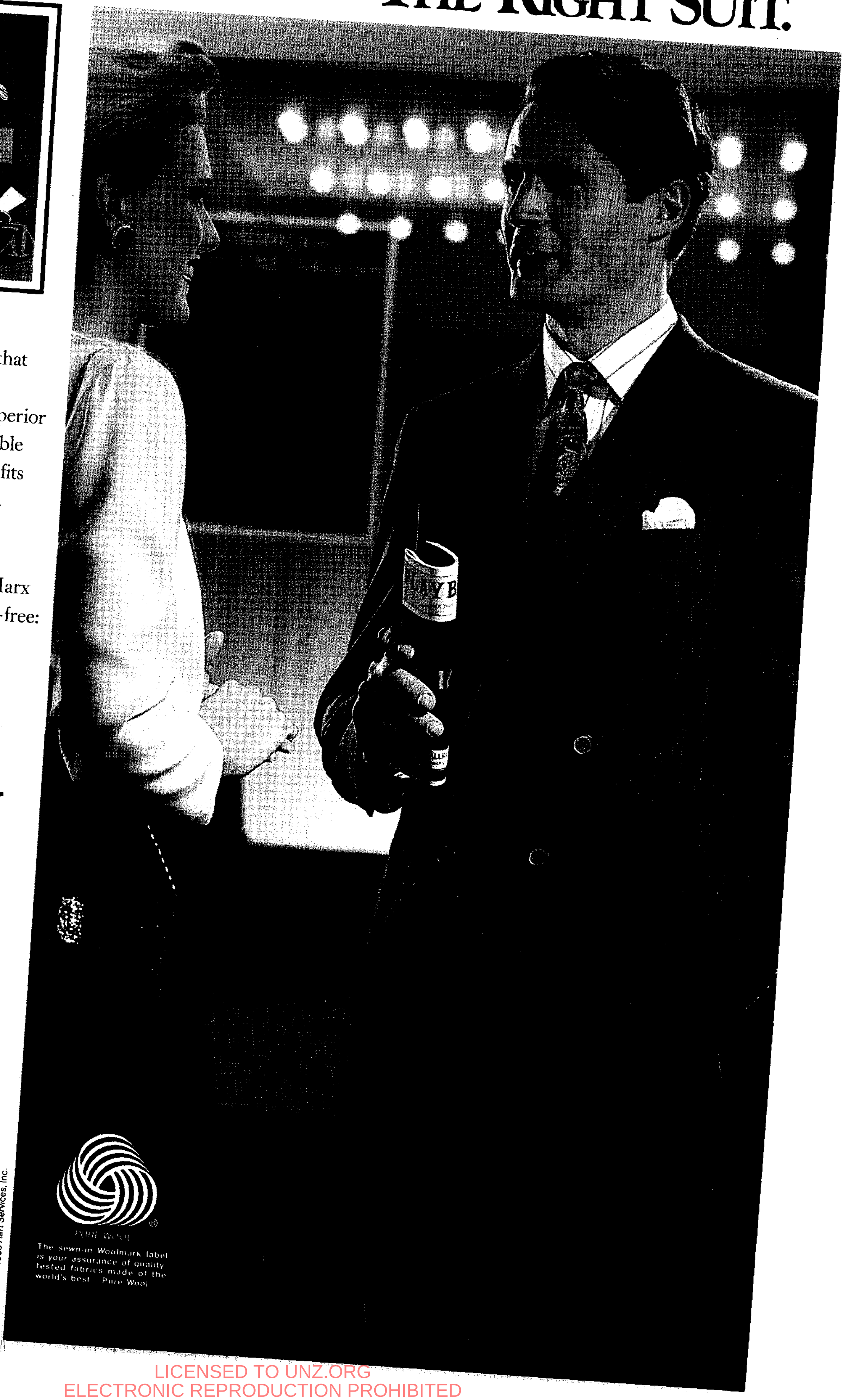

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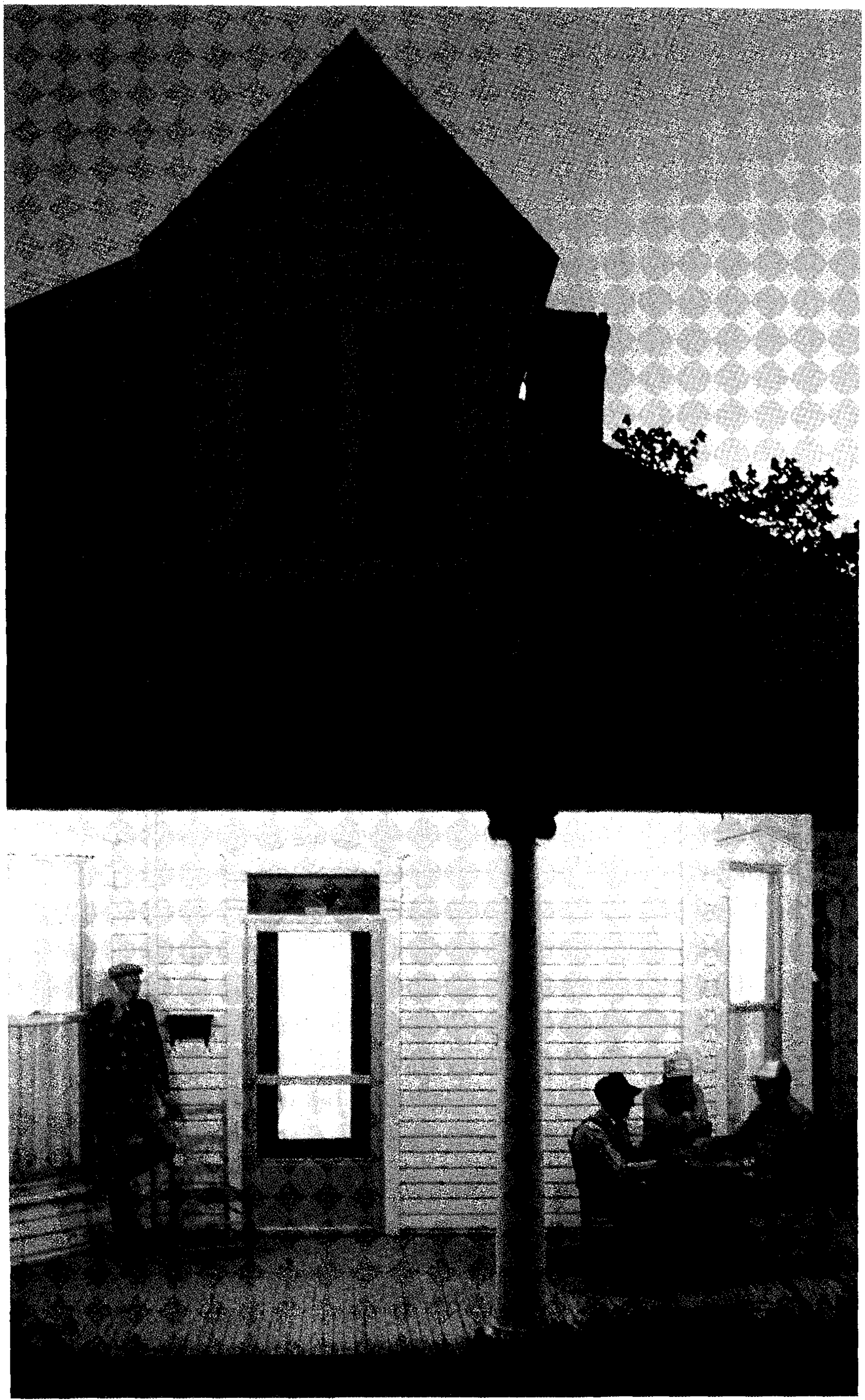

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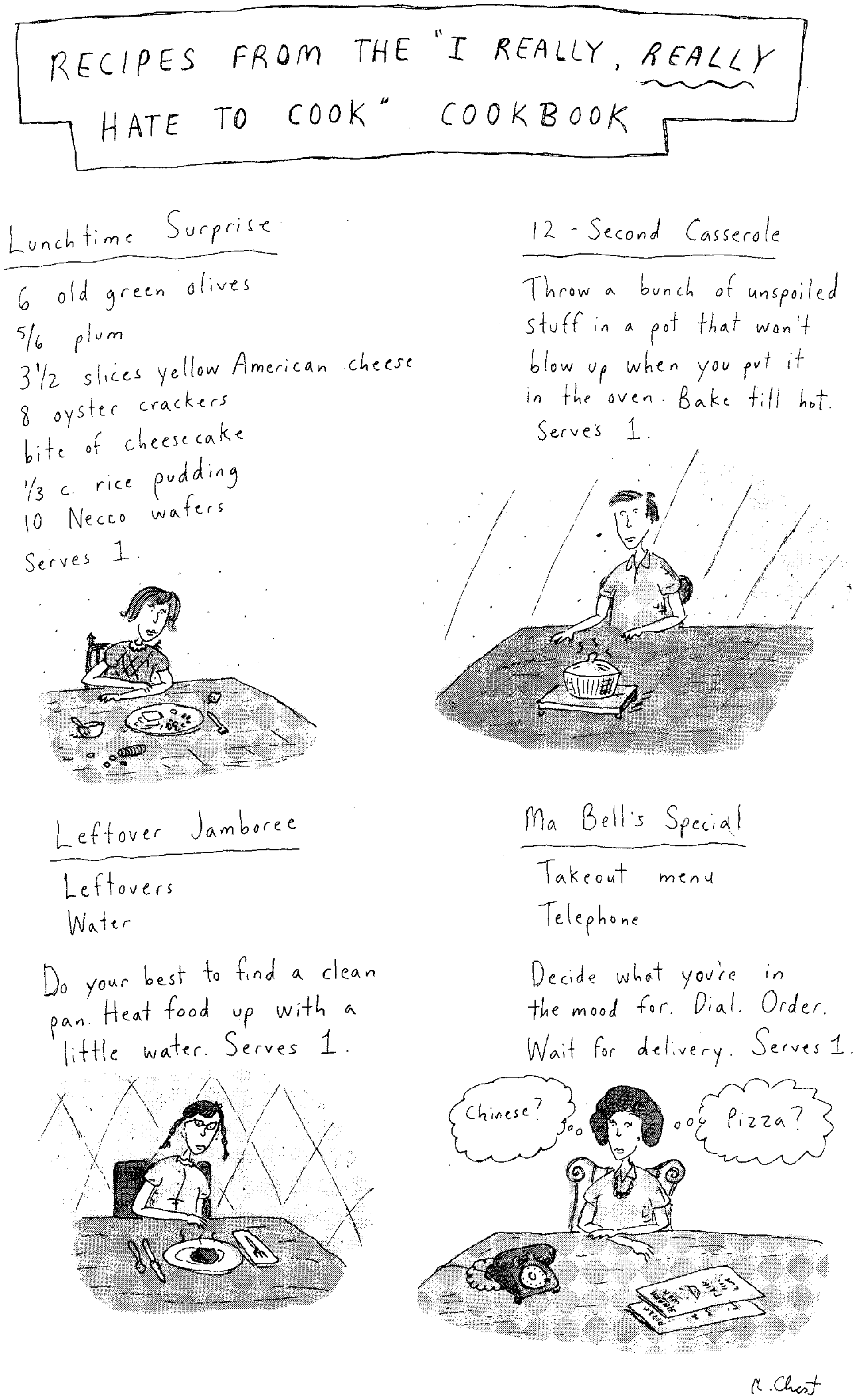
city blocks in metropolitan areas, and major American-based corporations are passing into foreign hands.

THE real choices facing the United States in 1988 have almost nothing to do with the arcane matters that provide employment for the Cold War strategists. Far more basic questions of national identity and purpose are at issue. What is the mission of the United States as it enters a new century? To fight Communism? To be the architect and guarantor of a new global order? To build an island of prosperity and freedom in a world of accelerating misery? To force changes in the Soviet Union? The answers to such questions depend not upon knowledge of classified facts but upon wisdom and judgment. How the questions are answered will set the course for the United States in the twenty-first century, now just thirteen years away. Thinking about fundamental choices and goals is never easy, but we make it much harder than it needs to be, because the words we habitually use in talking about national security keep getting in the way.

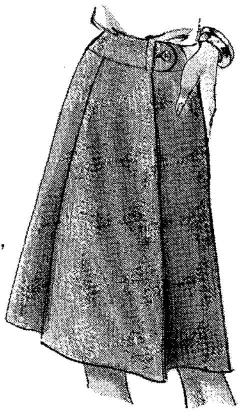
Since the National Security Act of 1947, the term "national security" has become a talisman. In the name of "national security," telephones are tapped, mail is opened, countries are invaded, American citizens are put under surveillance, Congress is deceived, the Secretary of State—perhaps even the President—is deceived, and, in the Nixon era, high crimes and misdemeanors were committed. But in no statute is there a definition of "national security." It has been enough to say that the United States has enemies, and that the way to deal with enemies s to acquire and from time to time use armed force against them. The only even quasi-official definition of "national security" I have found is in a dictionary that was prepared for the Joint Chiefs of Staff: "a. a military or defense advantage over any foreign nation or group of nations, or b. a avorable foreign relations position, or . a defense posture capable of successully resisting hostile or destructive ction from within or without, overt r covert."


RECIPES FROM THE "I REALLY, REALLY HATE TO COOK" COOKBOOK
Lunchtime Surprise
6 old green olives
5/6 plum
3½ slices yellow American cheese
8 oyster crackers
bite of cheesecake
⅓ c. rice pudding
10 Necco wafers
Serves 1.
12-Second Casserole
Throw a bunch of unspoiled stuff in a pot that won't blow up when you put it in the oven. Bake till hot. Serves 1.
Leftover Jamboree
Leftovers
Water
Do your best to find a clean pan. Heat food up with a little water. Serves 1.
Ma Bell's Special
Takeout menu
Telephone
Decide what you're in the mood for. Dial. Order. Wait for delivery. Serves 1.
Chinese?
Pizza?
R. Chast

• •

This obscure government document merely reflects the conventional understanding in the corridors of power. It would not be much different in the C.I.A., the State Department, or the National Security Council. Security is treated as a scarce commodity. If I have more of it, you must by definition have less of it. The inevitable result is that each player seeks more security by making his potential adversaries more insecure. This is obviously a prescription for permanent war in one form or another. At times, this truism is recognized. Sometimes governments talk about "interdependence" and "common security." But normally the institutions of government and the official rhetoric operate as if the pursuit of security were a contest.

IN the late nineteen-eighties, we have lost our sense of what "national security" is because we are confused by the meaning of "nation." Nationalism is still the strongest political ideology in the world, but what a "na-



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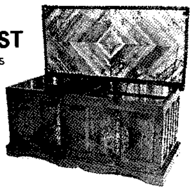

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tion" actually is today differs dramatically from what it was in 1789, when George Washington first took the oath of office, and even from what it was in 1948. Any sensible national strategy must begin with some conception of the national interest, whether explicit or not, and this is based on a series of assumptions about what a "nation" is, what it can do, and what costs it may safely incur. Usually, these assumptions are unstated and undebated, because they are hidden in the interstices of language.

A possibly useful definition of "national security" might be something along these lines: "a desired state of physical safety, economic development, and social stability within which there is space for individuals to participate in building an American community free of both foreign coercion and manipulation by government." (Citizens are not secure if the strategy for keeping foreign enemies at bay causes the government to impugn the patriotism of dissenting citizens, and to treat them as enemies to be watched.)

The meaning of "national security" is obscure because the word "nation" presents a false face. As it is habitually used, it is misleading in two respects. First, it suggests that a nation is a distinct entity, which can act on the outside world without feeling boomerang effects, although these are in fact inevitable. One of the consequences of seeing foreign policy as a succession of confrontations involving winners and losers is that the defeats are ignored and the victories—such as the restoration of the Shah to the throne in 1953, the invasion of Grenada, the bombing of Libya—go unexamined; their price tag is neither calculated nor disclosed, nor is the transient nature of the triumph noted. The sinews of national strength—American-owned enterprises employing American workers able to compete in the world market and to maintain what ten generations of Americans have built on this continent—have been weakened by neglect. Much of this sacrifice has been deemed necessary to maintain the war-prevention system we call "deterrence," but the sacrifice has caused some of our inner cities to look as if the war had already taken place. The prime objective of modern warfare, the demoralization of the civilian population, has been accomplished in a substantial number of farming communities and city neighborhoods by our own efforts.

The word "nation" is misleading in

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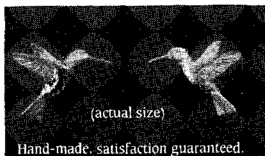

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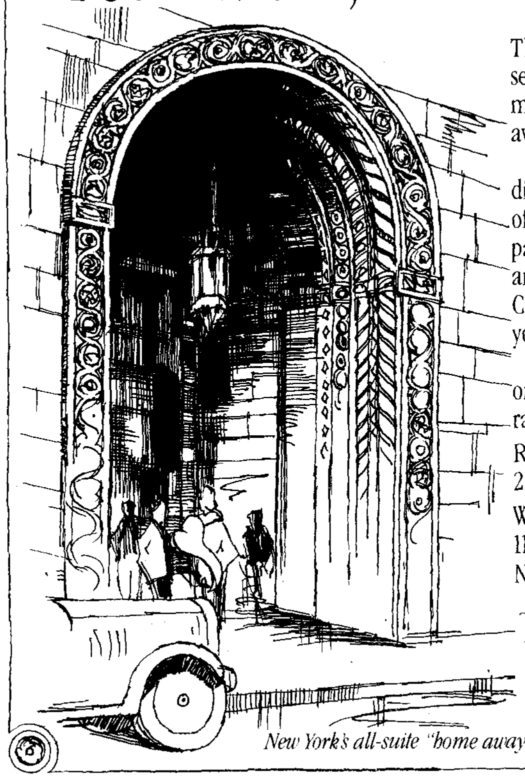
another respect. It implies that each constituent part of the whole owes its primary loyalty either to the government in Washington or to the American people, who, under the Constitution, are sovereign. But in a commonwealth as divided as the United States has been from the start the system has never worked quite this way. In the War of 1812, a good many Federalists would have preferred to see the British win rather than to see the locus of national power pass to the American West. Today, the question of national loyalty is still more complex. We have assumed, for example, that what is good for the largest American-based corporations and banks is good for the American people, on the theory that their wealth redounds to the strength of the nation. But, increasingly, this is not what has happened. Decisions on the part of banks to make quick profits by foolish loans to Third World nations have helped to create a world debt problem that poses a threat to the economy of the United States. American-based corporations producing goods in Taiwan or Korea are now an important part of the "foreign competition" that has forced a disastrous trade deficit upon the United States. The internationalization of the American economy is not a scandal but a fact of life, a more or less inevitable process in the growth of capitalism and the world economy. The scandal is that neither laws nor official rhetoric recognizes the transformation that has occurred, and the nation grows weaker under the illusion that national boundaries protect us. A rethinking of national-security policy requires looking at the domestic impacts of alternative military and economic policies and understanding the connections better, but the federal government has no effective way of doing this, because the arbitrary separation of foreign and domestic policy is scrupulously maintained.

ALL this suggests that "defense" is a much more complex process han the word implies. The seductive mage that the word throws up is of a piece of real estate with a fence around it and perhaps a snarling dog or two nside: nations can guard themselves either by putting up a shield (S.D.I.) or, more usually, by arranging to fight potential intruders on their own turf. But borders are hopelessly permeable. They cannot stop nuclear missiles, rugs, or illegal aliens; as the Iran-Contra affair showed, secrets cannot



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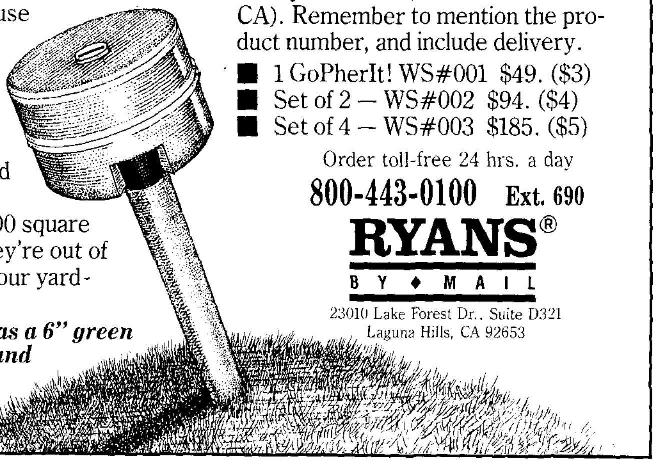

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be kept in, nor can embarrassing information from abroad be kept out.

A more apt analogy is the human body defending itself against disease. The primary strength of a nation comes from within. Its essence is spirit, not hardware. Like people, nations are inescapably vulnerable. How well they ward off outside attack depends on their inner health as much as on their ability to control the surrounding environment. As with the human organism, every defensive response has side effects. Yet we have no institutions within the government to evaluate, or even note, the political, economic, and social side effects of the measures we take for our national defense.

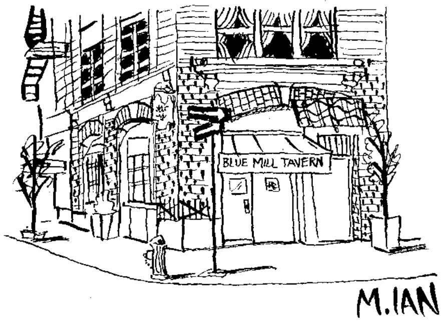
"Power" is another word we use too easily in thinking about security. A major function of the military is to back up diplomatic efforts to advance American interests; armed might is considered a useful instrument for convincing other nations that American solutions to international problems ought to be taken seriously. On the threshold of the new century, it is very easy to say what power isn't. It is not a new weapon that cannot be used. No addition to a stockpile of sixteen hundred strategic missiles with nuclear warheads increases the power of the acquiring nation, because the nation can do no more with the bigger stockpile either to fight a war or to deter a war than it could do with the smaller. Similarly, the acquisition of military "capabilities" (another tricky word) for fighting implausible "conventional" wars is not easily convertible into power.

The unthinking equation of military hardware with national power ignores the reality of the last forty years. There appears to be a steadily diminishing relationship between the ability to destroy and the ability to achieve political objectives, at least for great powers with much to lose. There have been many occasions and many provocations for the use of military force, since there have been many enemies proclaimed and many acts of aggression committed: the Berlin blockade; Soviet military intervention in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan; terrorist attacks against Americans; and so on. But the actual commitment of United States military forces to battle has rarely been successful in the past four decades. The last clear-cut victory was General Douglas MacArthur's triumphant landing at Inchon, and that victory was negated two months later by the Chinese entry into the Korean War. (That the bungled operation in Grenada, an island of a hundred thousand people with a barely functioning government and a token army, should have made Americans "stand tall" suggests how victory-starved we have become.) Vietnam, the disastrous rescue mission to Iran, and the failure of America's "low intensity" wars to achieve their stated objectives in El Salvador and Nicaragua suggest that America's security problem may be rooted in misconceptions about the proper missions of the armed forces in today's world. As the ability to destroy has increased, so have the political constraints.

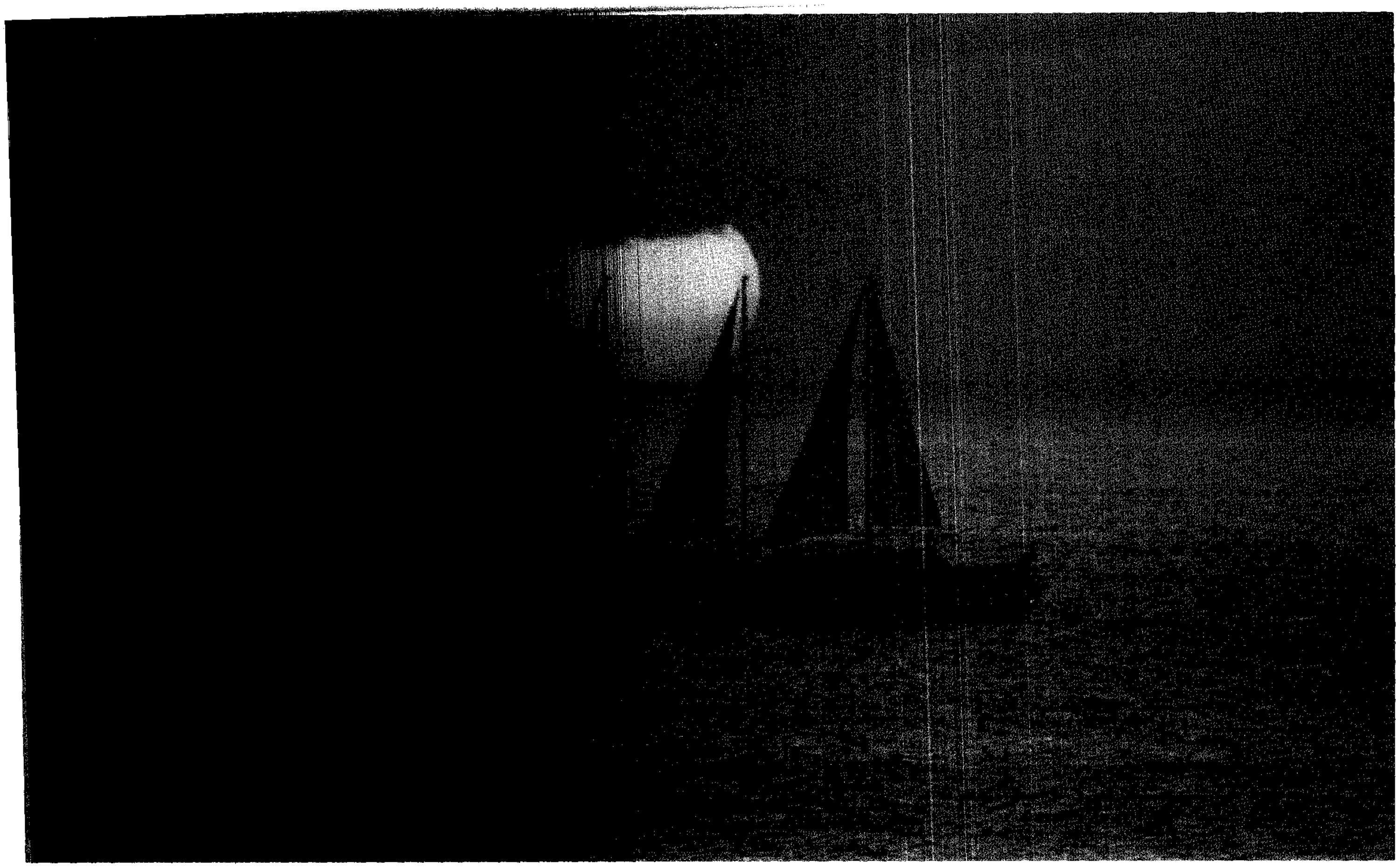
The reason for military failures is not lack of bravery or skill, low pay, or wrong weapons but stubborn realities that greatly inhibit the successful use of force by great powers. Most of the threats that our armed forces have been asked to address with weapons—either by shooting them or by supplying them to others—have been essentially political in nature, and have not responded well to our efforts. The tens of thousands of American lives sacrificed in the attempt to subdue North Vietnam and the twenty billion dollars' worth of sophisticated military hardware supplied to the Shah of Iran to keep an American peace in the Persian Gulf are prime examples of the assigning of impossible tasks to the military. It has become clear since the Vietnam War that the American people will not support large-scale military adventures abroad unless an overwhelming case can be made that national security requires it. This reaction to foreign military intervention, which the Reagan Administration has called "the Vietnam syndrome," reflects not pathology but intuitive realism about the limits of military power in the nuclear age. It is a real constraint on the use of military power as long as the United States remains a democracy.

The only deployments of military force in recent years which could be said to generate political power took place in situations in which force was introduced as a bargaining chip in a negotiation. The Reagan Administration argues that deployment of the intermediate-range missiles in Europe led to the I.N.F. agreement, and that the six hundred and thirty million dollars' worth of covert military aid to the Afghan resistance last year and the hundred and fifty million dollars' worth of aid to the Contras in Nicaragua were the decisive factors in bringing about the possibility of a Soviet pullout from Afghanistan and a liberalization of the Sandinista regime. This argument is not provable, but let us assume that it is true. An important conclusion follows: for a great power, the only effective military option in a world of nuclear weapons is a relatively limited show or use of force, preferably on someone else's territory and with young men from some other country doing the fighting and dying. The Soviet experience in Afghanistan, like the American experience in Vietnam, shows how tightly constrained superpowers are in fighting their own wars—constrained not only by domestic opinion but by the risks of escalation and pressures from other nations. In each of these cases, the superpower abandoned its original war aims despite the abundance of available hardware and troops.

The recent report of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, convened by the Department of Defense, recognizes this point and recommends more emphasis on "low-intensity conflict" in the Third World. "Low-intensity conflict" is a euphemism for subsidizing non-American like the Contras, the Mujahideen o Afghanistan, or the army of El Salvador to fight what are perceived to b American battles in strategic places But surely a strategy that bases th safety of the richest nation in th world on the sacrifices of desperatel poor people in distant lands is a cynica and corrupting form of dependence unworthy of that nation.



MEASURED by the ability to produce beneficial changes in th international environment, the powe of the United States has decline precipitously in the last decade, in par because of changed circumstances, i part because of a failure of nerve. Th Reagan Administration, despite its bi military buildup, has been unable t bring weight to bear on either of th two prolonged wars of the Middl East—the war between Iran and Ira



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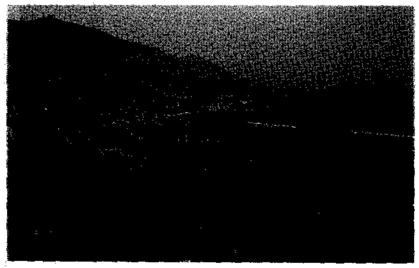

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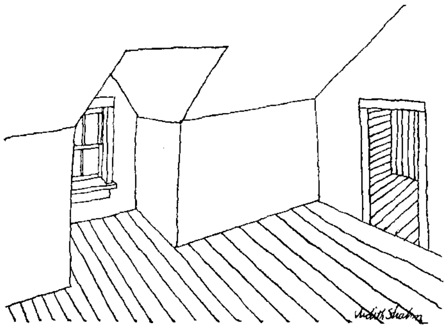
and the struggle among Israel, the Palestinians, and the Arab states. One index of the loss of American power is that the national-security managers have become so torn in their policy goals—at once wishing to engineer peace and to punish nations deemed to be "enemies"—that they cannot make a serious effort to use American power to help settle dangerous conflicts. Indeed, the United States has at times aided both sides in the Iran-Iraq war, apparently in the short-sighted belief that it somehow serves American interests to keep two "enemies" busy.

What sort of power is the United States seeking? Power to do what? What is the connection between the exercise of power abroad and the creation of space for development at home? Until we begin to have a national discussion of these questions, the word "power" will remain empty. Meanwhile, at a time when international agreements and institutions for managing the world economy are urgently needed, the United States is playing a passive role. If the existing arrangements were clearly beneficial to American interests, this passivity would be understandable, but now that the United States is the world's largest debtor nation it has the most to gain from reforms to stabilize monetary arrangements and to establish a new set of agreements and institutions to regulate world trade. Unfortunately, however, the United States is no longer the dynamic actor on the world scene. Increasingly, when it takes action at all, t is simply responding to the initiaives of other nations.

Or take the word "friends." The co-opting of this word into the vocabulary of national security is particuarly offensive. Free citizens choose heir friends. If our government insists upon choosing our friends for us, it has some obligation to exercise better aste. Over the years, friends like Anastasio Somoza, Ferdinand Marcos, Ngo Dinh Diem, and the Shah of Iran have trooped to Washington to be welcomed in behalf of the American eople by a succession of Presidents. f the government wishes to make a ase for giving these and other dictators American money and guns, it hould make the case on the ground f self-interest. But because such a case ften cannot be made ideology and entimentality take over. A murderus, vulnerable leader of some Third World country is proclaimed a "friend" because he rents us bases or because he pursues Communists in his country or because he calls his enemies Communists, even when they are not, or because he votes "correctly" in the United Nations. Once the status of "friend" has been established, it cannot be easily altered. It is a matter of "honor" to stand by political leaders who have been declared friends, except when "national security" dictates that they be eliminated, as in the case of the former friend Ngo Dinh Diem, the President of South Vietnam, whose overthrow was engineered after a wink from the American Ambassador.

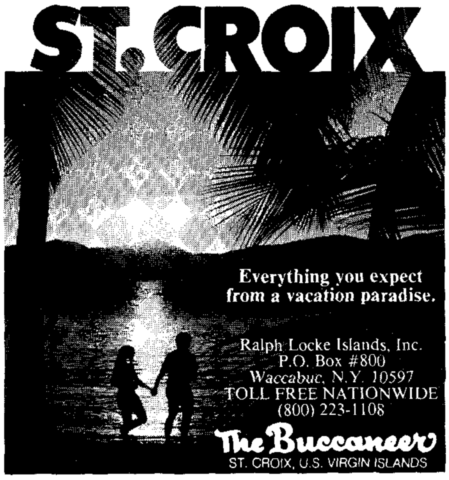
The "friendship" argument has been used to goad members of Congress into supporting the Contras after all arguments based on realpolitik have collapsed. The heavy-artillery version of the argument is expressed in terms of "commitments." As the Iran-Contra episode shows, it matters a good deal who makes "commitments" in behalf of the United States of America. Some "commitments" have been made by bureaucrats without legitimate authority, like the Poindexter-North crowd. Other "commitments" were made properly but in radically different times and should be reëxamined. The leaders of the military establishment are right to say that it is difficult, even impossible, to cut the military budget without cutting our "commitments."

The first step is to bring the "commitments" into the light of day. Most American taxpayers have not even heard of many of them. Few know why they were made in the first place, and even fewer know what difference thirty or forty years may have made with respect to these obligations. If changes in the basic commitments that the nation has made to its own citizens—Social Security, veterans' benefits, etc.—have to be reconsidered because of budgetary constraints, surely decades-old commitments to foreign leaders can be reëxamined. Obviously, no duly authorized commitment should be abandoned lightly, but many commitments are based not on treaty obligations but on executive decisions, on statutory provisions slipped into laws enacted years ago with little or no debate, and, sometimes, on just bureaucratic momentum. For example, the Senate has not considered the foreign-policy implications of the military installations constructed in recent years in Oman, Kenya, and Somalia. The case for each such commitment must be made anew in the light of current realities. A comprehensive review would also consider alternative commitments that the United States should now be making.



"Enemies" is another troubling word. It is a term of war but is now used to describe nations with which the United States maintains diplomatic relations while seeking the overthrow of their governments—Nicaragua, for example. The more diplomatic word, which is more frequently used, is "adversary"—a common State Department word to describe the Soviet Union. "Adversary" suggests conflicting interests and a willingness to pursue those interests to the damage of the United States, and that is a fair description of the Soviet government. The trouble is that the description fits even better some governments that are our allies. The policies that Japan pursues for its own prosperity now hurt the United States more directly and more deeply than the revolutionary ambitions of the Soviet Union. Is Japan an adversary? Is West Germany? Should the United States once again treat these allies as "enemies"? Obviously not. But then the concept of adversary needs to be rethought.

IT sometimes appears that the purpose of United States policy toward the Soviet Union is to force the leaders in the Kremlin to give up dreams that we say they have but that they deny having; that is, world conquest, world domination. Dreams are evanescent, and quite beyond the reach of even the most advanced reconnaissance satellites. Nothing is easier for an "evil empire" than to publicly disown aggressive dreams. There is no reason for us to feel one whit safer when it does so. But arming against the dreams we impute to other nations is a hopeless exercise and a recipe for bankruptcy. The Soviet Union is an adversary not because of its dreams but because of its military "capabilities" and because of specific behavior on its part that has caused alarm. It is within the power of the United States to modify both the Soviet military potential and Soviet political behavior, but only



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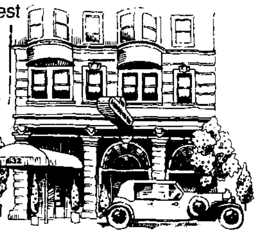

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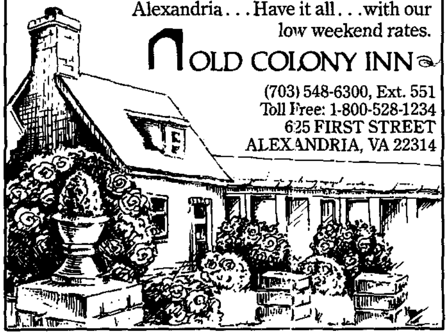
by modifying its own, and building a new relationship with the Soviet Union, based on the considerable mutual interest that now exists.

The United States has forgotten the war aims it embraced when the Cold War began. As the Soviet Union appears to be moving toward strengthening its own society by making it less arbitrary and less brutal, some American leaders cannot decide whether this is good news or bad. George Washington warned against "passionate attachments," which let habit and emotion rather than reason decide who is friend and who is foe. If ever there was a time to reach a consensus on what the Cold War is about—whether it is a struggle to contain military aggression, to defeat a "threatening" ideology, or to humble what used to be our only rival for global power—that time is now. Examining old habits of mind and passionate attachments to "friends" and "enemies" would enable the United States to bring commitments and resources into balance. Rethinking the purposes for which we have sought power can help erode our decline in influence and credibility. The United States is still immensely strong, and its possibilities are enormous. The society and the economy are maturing. There is no inexorable path toward decline which Americans are doomed to walk. But choices must be made, and they should be made on the basis of judgments about what has already worked to advance the interests of the American community and what has not.

This is a nation to which winning is important. Our culture is competitive. Since most other nations also see international politics as a game, it is perhaps utopian to think that the United States could come to consider our fragile planet in another way. Yet the American community could not have been built if there had not also been a capacity for coöperation in the American character. It was teamwork that made survival on the frontier possible in the nineteenth century, and the development of mass production in the twentieth. Surely it is not too much to hope that the American people will come to see that the national-security game has changed. What we need are leaders who, in coöperation with the leaders of other nations, will help write new rules and then live by them. We can begin the process of rethinking national security by calling things by their right name.

—Richard J. Barnet



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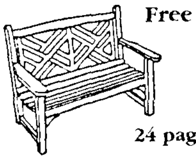

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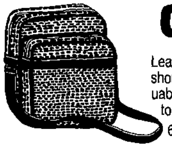

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MUSICAL EVENTS

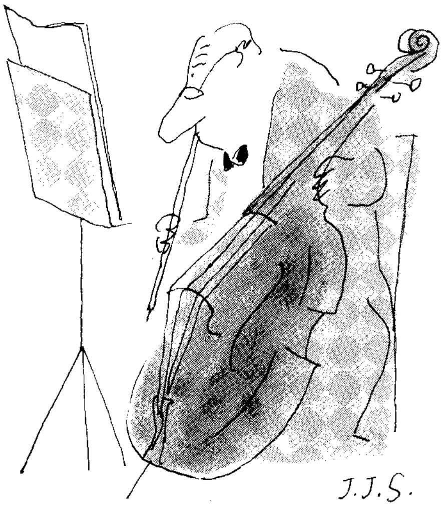
Ways to Go

THE Metropolitan Opera's new "Siegfried," the third installment of the "Ring" begun in 1986, appeared last month. "Götterdämmerung" is due in October; three complete cycles are due a year hence. Günther Schneider-Siemssen is the designer, Otto Schenk the stage director, and James Levine the conductor. Their "Siegfried," like the "Walküre" and the "Rheingold," is a large, handsome staging in the old style—executed by modern methods, but in spirit closer to Cosima Wagner's 1896 Bayreuth production, which was designed by Max Brückner, than to anything that has happened since. Many people have been eager for a historicizing "Ring" of this kind—one that, obedient to the scenic directions, unites the composer's intended actions and visual symbolism with his "deeds of music." In an age when eccentric presentations of the "Ring," in settings far removed from hose prescribed by its creator, have become the rule, such an inscenation hould be welcome.

The Met "Ring" so far has not made a decisive case for historicism. ndeed, it might be thought to have ent new force to Adolphe Appia's well-known attack on Cosima's approach—to demonstrate why Appia, nd Alfred Roller (in Mahler's Vienna), and Emil Preetorius (in Winifred Wagner's Bayreuth) designed the "Ring" in a simpler manner. Preetorius advocated "restraint in execution, implicity and largeness of form, readth and clarity of overall construction." A "Ring" designer, he aid, "must exclude all that is of only econdary importance and place his mphasis on the things that carry symbolic weight." But "on no account may one simplify or stylize at will . . . one must always remain fixed on the rm ground of natural truth and concrete image."

It would be wrong to draw conclusions about the advisability or not of "Ring" realism from a single example, nd it would be premature to reject the yle of a "Ring" that is still being shioned. The manner of the Met decor represents a bold decision, but he stage direction is still tentative. Things now weak may well be rengthened. The actors have not yet earned to command scenery whose ofusion of rupellary and vegetable detail denies them any easy prominence. They often disappear into the sets. Sometimes the lighting designer, Gil Wechsler, helps them to stand out. In a few episodes of Act II, Siegfried is well caught by shafts of bright sunlight slanting through the forest. But in Act III Wotan's features during his encounters with Erda and with his grandson—two important scenes, of wide emotional range and dramatic import—remain invisible. Cloudscapes are set suddenly scudding at the turn of a switch. Much needs refining.

Coherence must be awaiting next year's complete cycles, when, presumably, the company will give some undivided attention to the whole huge drama. This season, eight performances of "Das Rheingold," nine of "Die Walküre," and six of "Siegfried" are scattered across more than five months. The spectacular "Tosca" and "Die Walküre" have been played on a single day; so have "Siegfried" and the spectacular "Turandot." Mr. Levine has interspersed "Ring" assignments with "Otello," "Ariadne," and "Così." Casts change constantly, and in the circumstances Mr. Schenk seems to have been content to let the actors do each his or her own thing, as learned elsewhere. In days when there was a generally accepted style of Wagner enactment, this would not have mattered: Kirsten Flagstad and Hans Hotter could have walked, confident, into these Met scenes without rehearsal and given noble performances. But much of what the modern singers do—a touch of Peter Hall here, a touch of Patrice Chéreau there—accords ill with the old-style scenery. The current Bayreuth fad for singing long stretches of music while kneeling looks silly in these busy sets: deprived of stature, the singers become insignificant. A Brünnhilde and Siegfried who end "Siegfried" by coupling in the open, out on the rock, while the curtain falls have strayed in from quite a different sort of "Ring" production.



Peter Hofmann, originally billed to sing the title role in four of the "Siegfried" performances, withdrew, and the Carinthian tenor Wolfgang Neumann, billed for the other two, sang on the opening night. He was good—so good as to make it surprising that he is not more famous. A flip through the 1986 *Opera*—1987 is not yet indexed—shows him as Aaron (in Schoenberg's opera) and Loge in Barcelona, Siegmund in Dallas, Tristan in Santiago, and Rienzi in Mannheim, where he is based. His voice was strong, forthright, unforced, and unflagging. His performance was intelligent and assured. He looked convincing. He moved well. The words were clearly projected, with a feeling for their sound as well as their sense. The phrases were tellingly shaped. I have heard Siegfrieds more individual—more moving, romantic, exciting in particular passages—but recall none, from Set Svanholm onward, more consistently dependable at once vocally, visually, and interpretatively.

Seven of the eight "Siegfried" roles changed interpreter during the run. Only Fafner the dragon, voiced by John Macurdy through powerful amplification, held steady—and he did so vocally, too. At the last performance, Toni Krämer sang Siegfried. He has done the role in Berlin, Bayreuth, and Seattle. As modern Siegfrieds go, he was acceptable, and under careful direction he might become something more than that. His voice was clearly projected, and lasted well through the long evening. His phrasing, both vocal and visual, tended to be beat-bound. He acted freely when not singing, but in a colloquial and occasionally careless way: at the forge, he seemed to be handling red-hot metal with bare hands. When he did have to sing, he swivelled round to fix his eyes on the conductor or the prompter. He missed Wagner's jokes but made some of his own, being perhaps the first Siegfried to have won *two* salvos of laughter during the "Das ist kein Mann" episode: the first when he unwrapped the sleeping Brünnhilde with an exaggerated flourish, as if she were a delectable Christmas present to be displayed; the second four bars later, at the line

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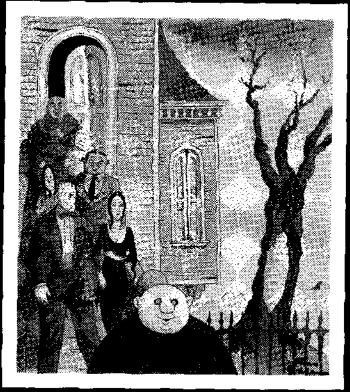

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itself. When the awakened Brünnhilde greeted the bright world, this Siegfried rolled over on his back to take a sunbath, and earned another round of laughter. At both performances, the anvil fell in two before Siegfried had struck it—not the Siegfried's fault but either incompetence or frivolity on the part of the stage management.

Donald McIntyre, the first-night Wotan, was in good voice, and gave his familiar performance, which is not particularly imaginative or compelling but is sound. Hans Sotin, at the final performance, poured out his high notes with carefully placed resonance but left the character somewhat blank. Franz Mazura was a potent Alberich at the start of Act II; Ekkehard Wlaschiha, his alternate, seemed promising but also ill at ease with Mr. Levine's slow tempi. Horst Hiestermann's Mime capered and cackled a good deal, in a carefully studied but excessively fussy performance.

Hildegard Behrens does not have a real Brünnhilde voice. She cannot fill the lines. On the sustained notes of the Awakening she wobbled. Any long, wide-ranging phrases were broken by preparations for particular notes. In place of radiant, ample legato she offered—as the *Times* critic nicely put it—"shining shafts of sound that illuminate the music in her own way." She gave an intense, detailed, emotionally intricate and compelling performance. It belongs in a more intimate house and in a subtler production. Since she is announced as the first Brünnhilde of the 1989 "Ring"s, we must hope that Mr. Schenk and Mr. Levine plan a presentation in which, goddesslike, she commands the stage (instead of squatting for long periods) and in which she does not have to push her voice through an overloud orchestra.

Mr. Levine's approach so far has been sure, slow, rather heavy, and "flowing" in a way that tends to override any fine dramatic detail. In "Siegfried," there was some excellent soft playing (so soft in the first-act prelude that at one performance an electric whistle high in the house dominated the score). There were a few coarsely exuberant climaxes: in the third-act prelude—taken at a lumbering, undifferentiated canter that suggested movie music, not the onset of a dramatic crisis—the brasses overwhelmed the strings. Otherwise, the orchestral sound has been warm and beautiful. The conductor of the Met "Ring," visible from the waist up, is as prominent a personage in the show as any of the singers. There has not been much sense of mutual inspiration flowing between the podium and the stage, generated by what happens during a particular performance. Rather, the conductor seems to go his own way, and if the singers are drowned at times, so much the worse for them.

Mr. Schenk strays farthest from Wagner in his presentations of Erda and of the dragon. Erda is not a majestic Earth Mother but a slender nymph, apparently naked beneath her filmy, spangled wrapper. (Anne Gjevang adopted attractive Lalique poses but sang murkily; I did not hear Gweneth Bean, the other Erda.) The dragon is an inflatable blob, fringed with slow-snapping claws; since it is rooted to one spot, like a sea anemone, it presents no serious threat to Siegfried. Robert Donington in his commentary on the "Ring" tells us (the "Siegfried" issue of *Opera News* followed suit) that the dragon is an aspect of Mother. Siegfried, after the misguided attempt at whittling dow his "little reed," raises to his lips "hi own hard silver horn." This summon Terrible Mother. By plunging his stif sword into her ("psychic incest") killing her, and then creeping into he cave, he is able "to confront and overcome the negative attributes of hi mother-image before seeking out hi *mother's successor in the person* o Brynhilde." Donington's general ac count of Siegfried's development in th *second-act confrontations* with Natur rings true, but, like most Jungian analysts of art, he piles on corroborativ detail that one is tempted to dismiss a corroborative fiddlestick. It is hard t view the dragon, with its foamin jaws, lashing, scaly tail, and deep bas voice as a motherly figure. The Met gooey, glutinous blob represents different maternal image, but one con trary to the general aim of presentin Wagner's drama with Wagner's ow symbolism. —ANDREW PORTE

•

LOVE IS A WONDERFUL THING DEPARTMENT

[From the Terre Haute Tribune-Star]

On their first anniversary, the Houg defrosted the top tier from their hear shaped wedding cake. On anniversar Valentine's Day celebrations that followe Mrs. Hough baked heart-shaped cakes ar cupcakes decorated with hearts and pi icing. Another year, she even added r food coloring to mashed potatoes.

More precious labors of love during t course of the Houghs' marriage resulted four children: Mike, Kim, Tim and Amy

BOOKS

Oscar

THE late Richard Ellmann's "Oscar Wilde" (Knopf; $24.95) runs to nearly seven hundred pages. It is exhaustive—not in the leaden manner of the fact-etishist but in the human spirit of fervent inquiry which was the merit of his masterly life of James Joyce and his studies of Yeats. He understands he interweaving of native Irish and Anglo-Irish temperaments both in anguage and in morality. Ellmann has in Wilde an Anglo-Irishman who acts his reckless way through the hidden intimacies of late-Victorian soiety—a man brimming with wit, mages, and inventive afterthoughts n his progress to fame and his own ndoing and fall. When reporters rowded round Wilde on his arrival in New York for his first lecture tour in America and asked the dandy what mpression the stormy Atlantic Ocean ad made upon him, Wilde replied hat it seemed tame. The reporters caled to London: "Mr. Wilde Disappointed with the Atlantic." But Ellmann reminds us that Wilde had once enounced the sea as being "unvingeable." He could always outdo himself. Yet at the height of his fame, Ellmann shows, Wilde is the classic agic hero—a self-deroyer, "refulgent, mastic, ready to fall."

Wilde's father was a shionable and distinuished Dublin eye rgeon who had been nighted; he founded . Mark's Hospital in ublin for special eatment of the eye nd ear. He was also a holarly expert on the eglected prehistoric urial mounds of eland, and an outanding expert on ish folklore. But he as no saint: he had thered three illegitate children before s marriage, and his fe was either too oud or too indiffert to complain. She as a patriot, who od for Irish freem, and was also a ish poetess, who felt rself to be "destined for greatness." She claimed to have been an eagle in an earlier life; believed that her family, the Elgees, were of Italian origin; called herself Speranza; and was famous for her flamboyant clothes. When Oscar was born, in 1854, she gave him the operatic names Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde—the O'Flahertie in honor of a supposed family connection with the pre-Norman kings of West Connacht who had provoked the famous Galway prayer "From the wild O'Flaherties good Lord deliver us!" Convinced of the genius of her son, she saw to it that he was sent to a school known as the Eton of Ireland, in Enniskillen, then to Trinity Dublin. There he became an excellent classicist. (It was at Trinity that he met his future prosecutor and destroyer.) The youthful Wilde was already an aesthete. He went on to Magdalen, Oxford, where, despite some delinquencies, he triumphed by winning the Newdigate Prize for poetry and got a double first.

Mr. Ellmann writes:

> And so Wilde created himself at Oxford. He began by stirring his conscience with Ruskin and his senses with Pater; these worthies gradually passed into more complicated blends of Catholicism, Freemasonry, aestheticism . . . he tried to resolve his own contradictions . . . as a source of strength rather than of volatility.

At Oxford, he lost, or was careful to lose, his Irish accent. On his successful lecture tours in America, the actor in him rediscovered his Irishness as he faced the descendants of the poor Irish emigrants. They were not much interested in his Pre-Raphaelitism or "the house beautiful;" for them he was the son of the poetic Speranza, the Irish patriot. One had supposed that his extraordinary clothes—the romantic cloak, the extravagantly wide collar, the velvet knickerbockers and silk stockings, not to mention the touches of jewelry—would draw ridicule. Far from it. Americans delighted in fantastic clothes, and Wilde's costume was not an eccentricity: he was more than half an actor, and he was also protesting against the heavy frock coat of conventional puritan success. (Still, he was a man not to be taken by surprise. Hearing that some students intended to jeer, he adroitly appeared in conventional dinner jacket. The revolt was killed.) In Wilde's private meetings with famous American writers, Longfellow and, above all, Whitman

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were impressed. Only Henry James—perhaps because of his own hidden secret—felt there was something "unclean" in him.

Wilde returned to Great Britain and in 1884 married Constance Lloyd. It seems certain that he had had homosexual contacts in Oxford, where they were tolerated, and even fashionable. Ellmann says that Wilde caught syphilis there, but thought himself cured when he became engaged. The courtship was slow. Constance's father had died and her mother remarried, and the girl lived with her grandfather, a lawyer. She was shy and was said to be "logical, mathematical . . . yet fond of talking." There are touching lines in a letter she wrote to her future husband about the failure of his early play "Vera" in America. She says of her life, with a ring of truth, "The world surely is unjust and bitter to most of us. . . . There is not the slightest use in *fighting* against existing prejudices. . . . I am afraid you and I disagree in our opinions on art, for I hold that there is no perfect art without perfect morality, whilst you say that they are distinct and separable things. . . . Truly I am no judge that you should appeal to me for opinions . . ." She was, Ellmann says, intelligent, capable, and independent. She was certainly well-read in French and Italian literature, and agreed to learn German so that she and Wilde could read it together.

When at last the couple married, they moved into "the house beautiful" that Wilde had helped to design, and Ellmann describes it in detail. The library where Wilde worked had pale-gold walls, and "along two sides of the room was a low divan, in front of which were ottomans, lanterns, and hangings, an Eastern inlaid table and—no chairs," Ellmann writes. And in the drawing room upstairs, appropriately, there was a small bronze figure of Narcissus. Wilde was indeed in love with himself, and, Ellmann says, "played the married man with a flair which suggested that for him it was an adventure rather than a quiescence." It was even more a dangerous display of the double nature of the born wit.

The sudden success in 1890 of Wilde's novel "The Picture of Dorian Gray" and, in the theatre, of "Lady Windermere's Fan" and "A Woman of No Importance" split his emotional, social, and sexual life. The homosexuality that had been stirred at Oxford put him at the mercy of the young Alfred Douglas, and, as Ellmann says, if Wilde was bold, Douglas was totally reckless—reckless in his extravagance—and unmanageable. He adds that since neither Wilde nor Douglas practiced sexual fidelity "money was the stamp and seal of their love," and that "like a figure in Greek tragedy Wilde had allowed his success to make him overweening." Douglas was a young man who, like his father, the Marquess of Queensberry and the author of the Queensberry rules for boxing, thrived on quarrels. As we follow the details, the sole comfort in a tangled story is Wilde's generosity to the young man who is destroying him. Wilde's ruin begins when he goes one morning to his club and finds from Queensberry, who is determined to rescue his son from Wilde's homosexual love and influence, an open note containing the fatal, ill-spelled words "To Oscar Wilde posing Somdomite." Wilde loses his head, brings an action for libel against the rough and noble foxhunter, and finds himself among deadlier actors than he is: the lawyers. Here we must pause to reconsider the exhausting character of the Marquess. If he was a brute, he was not a simple brute. He was a fanatical anti-Christian, a rule-bound man who put all his faith into eugenics. He was also a mundane and quarrelsome poet. (He once tried to break up a performance of Tennyson's "The May Queen," because an atheist was badly treated in it.) In one of his own poems, he has the blunt line "When I am dead, cremate me." His atheism upset the Scottish peers whom he represented in the British House of Lords; they refused to reëlect him, although he hoped to placate with a long, sententious poem, "The Spirit of the Matterhorn," about the death of his brother. If we add that the wild extravagances of Alfred had put a burden on the father's large estate, we can see that the born hunter was ready for a manhunt.

There were actually three trials. In the first, Wilde's defiance of Queensberry failed. Then, on the basis o evidence collected from male prostitutes, who had seen immense prospect for blackmail, he was charged with indecent behavior. Wilde's wife and friends urged him to go to France. He refused to take his chance. Ellmann writes:

> A half-packed suitcase lay on the bed emblem of contradictory impulses. He wa tired of action. Like Hamlet, as he understood that hero, he wished to distanc himself from his plight, to be the spectato of his own tragedy. . . . He had always me adversity head on. . . .

It was like the history of Timon o Athens or of Wilde's old admiration Agamemnon, yet meaner.

In London, Wilde's plays "A Ideal Husband" and "The Importance of Being Earnest" were taken of The same happened in New York. A the second trial, the jury disagreed The case was retried, and the thir time he was done for.

We know the rest. In Reading Gao the Governor was rigorous, and it wa a long time before Wilde was permi ted to write. Later, conditions were little easier, and many of Wilde warders were awed and sympatheti "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" tel his story. We may have become dub ous of the famous line "Each man kil the thing he loves" as a tragic utte ance, but the portraits of Wilde cowed fellow-prisoners are not easi forgotten. His life in France after h release is a life without a role. We s him uncertain and dismayed when, accident, some old acquaintance hes tates to recognize him: he can only b with his eyes or turn away. In t little hotel in Paris—ironically, close to the Beaux-Arts—the propri tor is decent, but the death of Wilde horrible. He was living on leth draughts of absinthe and brandy, a died of syphilis. His body burst. was buried first in the cemetery Bagneux, but in 1909 the body w moved to Père Lachaise, and Epstei famous monument was erected, w lines from "The Ballad of Reading Gaol":

And alien tears will fill for him
Pity's long-broken urn,
For his mourners will be outcast men,
And outcasts always mourn.

Wilde belongs to our world, Ellmann says, more than to the Victorian age. He certainly marks its end, and is probably, with the exception of Baudelaire, the only Aesthete whom we still commonly read—indeed, with alarmed delight. —V. S. PRITCHETT

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

ARMAND, by Emmanuel Bove, translated from the French by Janet Louth (Carcanet; $17.95). An empty cork-lined room would have furnished Emmanuel Bove (1898-1945) with countless distractions; his appreciation of sensual minutiae makes Proust's verbal still-lifes seem coarse in comparison. "Armand," first published in 1927, describes a day or so in the lives of four hypersensitive Parisians: Armand, the nouveau-riche (in a sense) narrator; Jeanne, a woman well off enough to keep him as her lover; Lucien, a tongue-tied and threadbare ex-buddy of Armand's; and Marguerite, Lucien's tongue-tied and threadbare kid sister. Little is done by Armand, and less is said by Jeanne; no offense is meant to Marguerite, but some offense is taken by Lucien. The reader, meanwhile, is kept busy interpreting gestural nuances that forecast the story's sad end. Armand sees everything, from white specks in Lucien's eyes to the white undersides of Marguerite's arms; and he hears "a tiny noise" rise from his toes, and his mistress's eyes open and shut in the dark.

CATAMOUNT BRIDGE, by Don Metz (Harper & Row; $16.95). The Woodard family has lived and farmed northern Vermont, for eight generations. Now, in the mid-sixties, there is Leon (who survived the First World War), his daughter-in-law, Vera (whose husband died in the Second World War), her twin sons, Harmon and Bodie, and Harmon's pregnant wife, Darlene. Harmon goes off to Vietnam. Mr. Metz shows us some months in the life of this close-knit, gallantly struggling, painfully inarticulate family, and gives each person a humanity and a seriousness that are rare in contemporary fiction. The result is a novel to relish and rejoice in.

THE TENANTS OF TIME, by Thomas Flanagan (Dutton; $21.95). Eight hundred-odd pages about a quarter century (1867-92) of Irish internecine fiascoes. "Schoolmasters and shop assistants and squireens with sprigged waistcoats" are among the principal players. "Ambushes, demagogues, famine graves," one of them bitterly muses. "That is our history." It is also love affairs, picnics, prison terms, portrait paintings, and pillow talk, involving ticket-of-leave men and gombeen men and Whistler and Parnell. Thomas Flanagan doles out generous portions of fact and fiction; one of the main characters, a historian interviewing old-timers in 1904, is escorted by two "Virgils." But it is steam-table fare. "Eternity in a grain of sand," one of the old-timers says, fondly misquoting Blake. Eternity, more like it, in a novel.

GENERAL

CLARENDON AND HIS FRIENDS, by Richard Ollard (Atheneum; $22.50). This relaxed, almost conversational life of the English statesman and historian (1609-74) opens with the observation "Clarendon is so much a part of the landscape of English civilisation that he is almost lost in it." Mr. Ollard describes Clarendon's education and early friendships as a way of discussing the sources of his ideas. In a century that seemed to offer Englishmen only one choice, between absolutism and republicanism, Clarendon insisted upon his own vision of constitutional monarchy. He entered public life as a member of the Parliamentary opposition to Charles I, who he thought had violated the English Constitution, but switched his support to the King when it seemed to him that Parliament, in its turn, was behaving unconstitutionally. Mr. Ollard is fascinated by Clarendon's remarkable resilience, which he ascribes to intellect and faith rather than to unreflecting toughness. This beguilingly subtle work unfolds the past as if it were new, but the author never tries to drag his subject into our own time.

MICROCOSMOS, by Jeremy Burgess, Michael Marten, and Rosemary Taylor (Cambridge; $24.95). This remarkable book consists largely of

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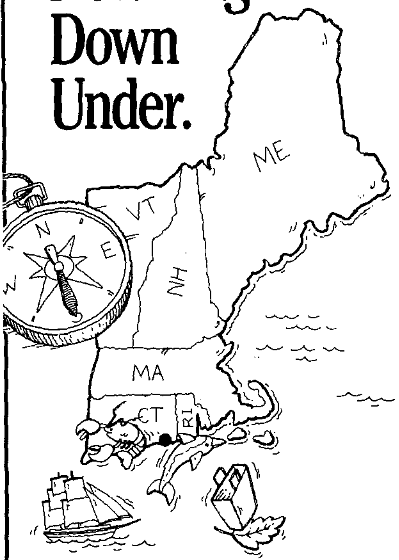

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photographs taken with the aid of various kinds of microscopes. The microscopes here use such things as electron beams to achieve amplifications that can be in the hundreds of millions—enough to see the structure of individual atoms. Needless to say, the photographs that result are of enormous interest to scientists. But they are much more than that. They illustrate the aesthetics of the familiar, or, better, the non-aesthetics of the unfamiliar; for example, the cross-section of a leaf magnified two hundred and fifty times looks grotesque. The authors provide a very useful textual guide to the pictures and an equally useful technical appendix explaining how the microscopes work.

THE RACE TO FASHODA, by David Levering Lewis (Weidenfeld & Nicolson; $24.95). In the autumn of 1898, a small French expedition commanded by Captain Jean-Baptiste Marchand met an Anglo-Egyptian army commanded by General Herbert Kitchener at Fashoda, an abandoned garrison on the banks of the White Nile in the Sudan, the territory that both forces had been sent to claim. The confrontation was settled by diplomacy (the French agreed to withdraw), and this peaceful resolution of imperial rivalry cleared the way for the Entente Cordiale. Mr. Lewis, a black American historian who has written a book on the Dreyfus Affair, takes a new and illuminating approach: he examines the twenty-odd years that led up to Fashoda from the point of view not only of the Europeans but of the African peoples whose territory they had invaded. What he finds is a pattern of resistance by Africans that affected European schemes in Central Africa. Mr. Lewis does not claim too much for that resistance but makes us appreciate its importance, as his realistic and vivacious narrative shows the Africans, using guile as well as force, repeatedly delaying, if not ejecting, intruders.

PAINTING AS AN ART, by Richard Wollheim (Princeton; $45). The six chapters of this weighty and handsomely illustrated volume are revised and expanded versions of the 1984 Andrew W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, delivered by the author at the National Gallery in Washington. Mr. Wollheim, currently on the faculty of Berkeley, was for many years a professor of philosophy at the University of London; he is not an art historian or critic, although he professes a lifelong passion for painting. He posits that all paintings must be looked at with the intentions of the painter uppermost in the mind of the spectator; that is, with an appreciation of the "desires, beliefs, emotions, commitments, wishes" that made the artist paint the picture. Only in this way, and by long, disciplined scrutiny of a picture, can we arrive at its full meaning. Mr. Wollheim has chosen a mixed bag of painters—prominent among them Bellini, Titian, Poussin, Ingres, Manet, and de Kooning—to illustrate his novel theory. His book is stimulating but, because of a wordy and crotchety prose style, quite often exasperating

NOTE: "Season Ticket: A Basebal Companion," by Roger Angell, has been published by Houghton Miffli ($18.95). Nearly all the content originally appeared in *The New Yorker*. . . . "The Gang's Al Here!," a collection of drawings by Michael Maslin, has been publishe by Fireside/Simon & Schuste ($5.95 paper). Some of the content first appeared in these pages.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

THE VULGAR BOATMAN, by Williar G. Tapply (Scribners; $14.95). I this engaging tale the good-hearte Boston lawyer and gourmand Brad Coyne reluctantly agrees to meet wealthy client, the gubernatoria candidate Tom Baron, at a franks and-beans fund-raising dinner i the Massachusetts North Shor town of Windsor. Coyne has les fear of heartburn than of being conscripted into Baron's campaign, bu he soon discovers that his client teen-age son, Buddy, has disappeared and Buddy's girlfriend ha been murdered. Swallowing h distaste for the situation, Coyn agrees to help find Buddy and persuade him to turn himself in. A he investigates, he begins to see th Windsor has been chosen as the te site for a high-powered drug operation with the trappings of moder marketing.

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CORRECTION

A recent announcement of an upcomi Jewish tour of Alaska incorrectly identifi one of the prizes. It is a dog sled ride wi a lifetime member of Hadassah.—*JT newsletter of the Jewish Telegraph Agency.*

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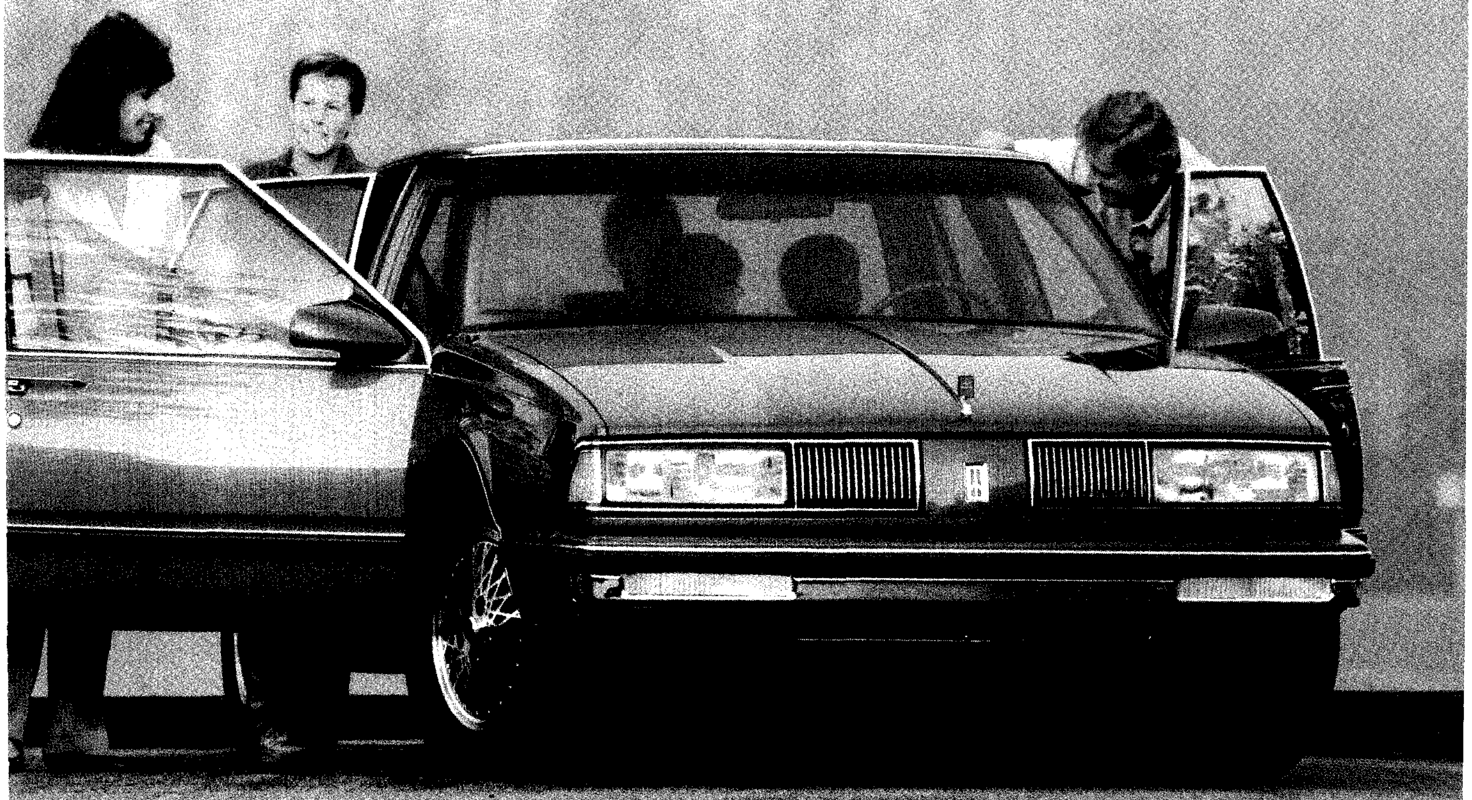

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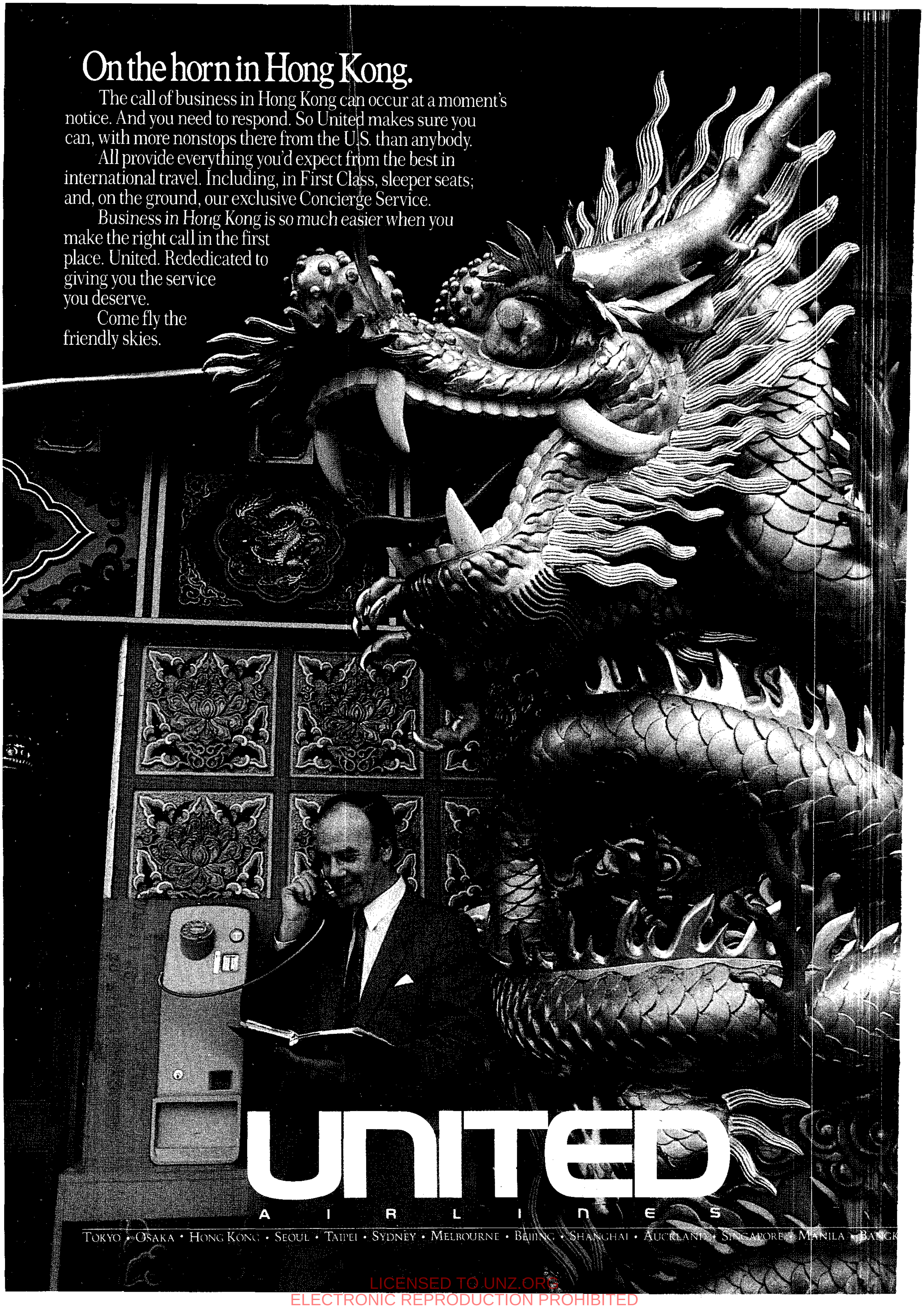

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